(3)

A FEW SERIOUS AND SEASONABLE OBSERVATIONS ON SOME MATTERS THAT ENGAGE NOW THE PUBLIC ATTENTION:

In which, the ſubject of TITHES, the diſturbances in the SOUTH, and the preſent ſtate and conduct of the ESTABLISHED CLERGY of IRELAND, are fairly conſidered.

BY A CURATE.

Nullius addictus jurare in verba magiſtri,
Quid verum atque decens, curo et rogo.

DUBLIN:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR,

By *B. Smith*, Bridge-ſtreet, and ſold by all the Bookſellers in Ireland.

MDCCLXXXVII.

[PRICE, 1s. 1d.]

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE author of these Observations has a very high opi-nion of the Bishop of Cloyne's pamphlet, and of that signed Theophilus. His situation prevented him from seeing these, until he had written the greater part of this little piece. He had then some notion of burning it; but soon through lenity, changed his mind, for which, he may possibly be blamed. Yet he hopes, it contains some things not unworthy, at this alarming season, of the public attention, which, with a desire natural to an author, he would be happy to gain. He thinks it requisite now, publicly to profess his respect and esteem for the large body of the Protestant dissenters of this kingdom, assuring them, that he had no intention to give them any offence, by some particular expressions, *which can be only applied to those of them, that unhappily have a cordial dislike to the clergy and church of Ireland.*

SERIOUS

AND

SEASONABLE OBSERVATIONS.

WHILE the minds of the people are heated by party, I doubt much if the arguments of an impartial obſerver, will receive a cool and fair examination. The popular current runs violently one way; it will therefore, I am afraid, be fooliſh in me to try to oppoſe it. My attempt will be like that of a ſeaman, more venturous than wiſe; who, with his puny bark, ſtrives to ſtem the rapidity of the tide. Conſcious of the pureſt motive, a regard to true religion, which is now little thought of in the world, I am leſs deſirous of fame from my writing.

In this age of religious innovation, when new opinions are ſpringing up every day, and ſpreading in wild luxuriance over the earth, it will be deemed quite uſeleſs, I fear, to ſay any thing in defence of thoſe ſettled forms or cuſtoms, that are now antiquated by time. It becomes me, therefore, to handle my ſubject with all due caution, truly ſenſible of the deep wiſdom of thoſe whoſe ſentiments are oppoſite to mine. Theſe ſentiments are moſtly taken from the common news-papers of the day, the wiſe conductors

of which are, no doubt, properly qualified to amuſe and inſtruct the nation. The ingenious writers of theſe, who are conſtantly charming us with their lucubrations, are now, I perceive, the teſt of every thing excellent. It is conſequently prudent in me to requeſt their countenance now, as alſo that of all porter-club critics, humbly begging their pardon, if I chance to differ in the leaſt from them in opinion; and bold would he be, who ſhould dare to oppoſe ſuch high authorities. His offence would be like that committed by the giants of old, who, placing mountain on mountain, profanely ſtrove to pull down great Jupiter from his lofty throne.

It is the faſhion of the times, at leaſt in this holy land, to be ſtill caſting ſharp ſarcaſms on the whole body of the eſtabliſhed clergy of the kingdom. This is a ſure ſign of the piety of the age. Every witling, fond of ſhowing his genius in print, that can ſpell a word of juſt two ſyllables, moſtly begins with throwing his nice little jokes at the clergy. Scarce a day paſſes, that they do not get a wipe from ſome of theſe fine jeſters. Wit, they think, and juſtly too, is the keeneſt weapon, when ſkilfully uſed, and therefore they are ſtill darting *their* wit, (ſuch as it is) at the clergy, conſcious of their being quite maſters at the trade. I do not however inſinuate that they over-rate their abilities; far be it from me, to be guilty of ſuch injuſtice. Their attempts at irony too, are amazing to behold: theſe attempts always conſiſt in making uſe of capitals, or *Italicks*; ſo that if their compoſitions ſhould unluckily be printed in plain common letters, it would be impoſſible for the ſharpeſt eye to find out their meaning. So great is their cleverneſs. All this proceeds from the depth of their genius, which ſcorns, like that of common people, to ſkim the ſurface, but dives to the very bottom of things. This is the true cauſe, why they are ſo often out of ſight. While our clergy are thus ſmartly ſtung by this ſwarm of witlings, I ſhould not be ſurpriſed if they could not get eaſe either night or day. Indeed, if

if they have the feelings of other men, they ſpend, I ſhould think, but a poor time of it; eſpecially thoſe of them that are condemned to be little vicars or curates all their days: (of this I muſt be ſuppoſed to be a competent judge) Yet let no one imagine, I will become an apologiſt for all the various dealings that take place in the church of Ireland. I will not undertake the office of white-waſhing over every pious proceeding of this kind. It would require one, who has ſerved a whole apprenticeſhip at the trade of political maſonry to be able to do it. And poſſibly it would pinch him, with all his ſkill, to make ſome of theſe even tolerably handſome to look at. All his whitewaſh might not be ſufficient entirely to conceal the native deformity of ſome deeds. In his attempt, however, he would have the honour of imitating the practice of moſt of our faſhionable ladies now a days, who have learned to become ſo many beauties by the aſſiſtance of paint.

A truly impartial man, if ſuch can be found, will not give himſelf up to be guided by any party at all; for this plain reaſon, that the beſt parties in a ſtate have been frequently wrong. He cannot therefore, according to his principles, undertake the defence of the whole of their conduct without exception. A Writer of this ſort ſhould poſſeſs the qualities which Lucian thinks abſolutely requiſite for an hiſtorian. His words are theſe; "Let the hiſtorian "I ſpeak of be void of fear, incorrupted, free, a "friend of liberty of ſpeech and of truth, one who, "to uſe the words of the Comedian, *calls a fig a fig*, "*and a boat a boat*, who is not influenced by hatred "or love, not too ſparing, not moved by pity or baſh-"fulneſs; let him be a juſt judge too, ſo far kind to "all as to diſtribute to no one more than his due; let "him alſo be a ſtranger in his books, not prejudiced "in favour of any ſtate or laws, not looking to the "opinion of this man or that man, but relating facts "as they are."

Every

Every writer, who is of no party, and wiſhes well to the cauſe of truth, muſt both have and practiſe theſe virtues. On the contrary, the ſcribbler who takes up one ſide of the queſtion, and ſupports it right or wrong, by fair or foul means, as a lawyer does his caſe, muſt always *wade through thick and thin in driving his point.* If he take the part of a miniſter for his weekly pay, he labours hard in his defence, he puts the moſt charitable conſtruction on all his actions, he gives reaſons for his conduct the miniſter never thought of himſelf. And while poſſibly, like Walpole, or ſome others of more modern date, the miniſter profeſſes to carry every thing before him by open bribery and corruption, his encomiaſt, fonder of his character than he is himſelf, makes him more pure and immaculate than Fabricius, or Ariſtides. Such is the effect of money. The miniſter's adherents too he ſhows to be a number of glittering planets, that derive their little ſplendor from the great luminary himſelf. But the patriots, as they are called, this hackney repreſents as ſo many *red Devils* let looſe from hell; eager to ſet the nation by the ears, that they may pick up ſomething for themſelves in ſcuffle; or bawling out againſt the miniſter, merely with an intent to have their mouths ſtopped with a bribe.

If a writer of this ſtamp become a panegyriſt of the great eſtabliſhed clergy, he makes them no doubt appear juſt ſo many ſaints upon earth; he ſays that they all to a man are quite eaſy about the vain pomp and grandeur of this low world, and that all their concern is to ſecure for themſelves a quiet retreat in heaven. Yes. He declares too that they are all put forward in the church for their vaſt piety, learning, and genius, and that flattery, cringing, wealth, family, or connections, had no hand in their promotion. He aſſerts boldly, that the biſhops, and high dignitaries treat the low orders of the clergy, eſpecially the poor curates, with great attention and kindneſs, and ſo on.

If, on the other hand, a gentleman ſcribe of this ſort, be employed by the managers of a furious ante-

cou

court news-paper to abuſe the government, he muſt juſt purſue an oppoſite mode of conduct. For, it ſeems, theſe impartial diſtributers of knowledge have alſo their hirelings to write for them, who often change their maſters. I have been acquainted in my time with ſome of theſe poor creatures, who were curious characters. The man kept in pay by theſe news-papermongers muſt be an open abominable reviler; he muſt repreſent the miniſter of the day in ſuch a horrible point of view, that the Devil himſelf, when compared with him, will be a decent ſort of a gentleman. The abettors of government he muſt ſet forth to the public as the moſt profligate of mankind, each of them deſerving the halter for his deeds. On the contrary, he muſt exert all his encomiaſtic talents in forming a panegyric on the whole body of the oppoſition. Then he muſt pay ſome pretty compliment to each of them, one after another. He muſt declare too that the motives of their conduct are the pureſt imaginable; that they are not tinctured with any baſe ideas of worldly profit; but that the good of their country is the ſole object of their proceedings. He muſt alſo ſay ſomething handſome of the young lawyers, who either purchaſe a ſeat in parliament, or get in by the favour of rich great men These on their firſt ſetting out are moſtly notorious patriots, and therefore fit ſubjects for his applauſe. It is to be ſure their trade to confound right and wrong, to make black appear white, and white black, and hire out their talents to thoſe who either employ them firſt, or pay them beſt. But they are never thought worſe of for this. Becauſe they put off theſe tricks and quirks with their gowns at the Four courts, and when they enter the H—— of C—— are quite pure and clean; as much ſo, as a country laſs who comes up to Dublin to try her fortune, you know where, freſh from milking the cows. Theſe young lawyers, when they get into the H—— of C———, rail away furiouſly againſt the corruption of the times, the profligacy of miniſters, and ſuch like popular objects of cenſure. Juſtice and honeſty,

they

they ſay, are now baniſhed out of the world; but they will do their endeavours to bring them back again by their words and actions.

If a petty author of the ſort I have been deſcribing, influenced either by pay or by prejudice, ſet about abuſing the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church (an uſual practice in our pious age) he generally does his buſineſs moſt effectually. He makes few or no exceptions at all, but aſſerts roundly that they are all a pack of damned raſcals *from the top to the bottom*. He declares that there is no longer occaſion for ſuch fellows, and that they ſhould be driven all out of the country. At leaſt, he ſays, their property ſhould be taken from them, and be divided partly among the popiſh prieſts or preſbyterian teachers, and partly among the poor authors in his way, who ſtand much need of it. Then no doubt he ridicules with great wit the habits and orders of the clergy, ſhowing to the ſatisfaction of all, that theſe are quite abſurd. Then he falls upon the church form of prayer, which he ſoon levels with the ground. Like Ajax. or Diomede, he deals deſtruction where-ever he comes; and woe to him that oppoſes ſuch a hero!

It is needleſs to ſay that a writer of impartiality (of which I would wiſh to be eſteemed one) is exactly oppoſite to theſe little party ſcribblers. He ſcorns to flatter any man, or body of men. He ſtrips things of every falſe glare, and ſhows them naked to the public eye. He examines accurately into the motives of men, for he does not find it always ſafe to judge of theſe by their pompous talk. The miniſters of ſtate he makes neither ſo pure as their friends, nor ſo defiled as their enemies would repreſent them. Self intereſt he ſhews in general to be their ruling principle (a motive too prevalent in the world) though he owns ſome of them are carried by it much farther than others. A few of them, he thinks in charity would not ruin the country for their own private ends, but he would not promiſe poſitively for the reſt. He always proves them by their deeds, and beſtows ſuitable applauſe on that miniſter,

miniſter, who, notwithſtanding the clamours of faction, dares to do his duty. The miniſter's adherents he looks on, like other mortals, to be partly good, partly middling, and partly bad; though poſſibly the laſt two epithets may be juſtly applied to the moſt of them. Many of them he is afraid would go any lengths to keep their places or penſions; but he hopes a few of them, if driven too hard, would turn cruſty on the way. One or two late inſtances tend to countenance this opinion. He would own, no doubt, with pleaſure, that ſome gentlemen, friends of government, and chiefly one raiſed now to high dignity in the Houſe of Commons, have of late been of eſſential ſervice to this nation; for he is ſure many of theſe would wiſh to do good of this ſort, where their own private intereſt is not immediately concerned.

He obſerves a ſimilar conduct with reſpect to the patriots, as the term is. Some of them, he allows, are influenced by a real love of their country, and by a diſlike of the bad doings of the court. Others of them, and thoſe not a few, he ſhews to be puſhed on by ſpite and envy; juſt ſwelling with rage, becauſe they cannot ſcrape up a place or penſion for themſelves, and get ſhare of the plunder while it is going. A hard caſe indeed! Theſe are generally the moſt clamorous in the H—— of C———, and conſequently eſteemed the greateſt patriots by the people, who, though often gulled by them, can never, until too late, find out they are deceivers. Still, however, a political advantage is derived from their duplicity, ſince they ſerve as a ſort of ſpies on the court, who, on that account, are forced to be ſomewhat more cautious in their conduct. Party too, an impartial author might point out as a prevailing principle with a few of the patriots, and with many of the courtiers. But this monſter happily has not grown to ſuch a height in Ireland as in England, where it is armed with power almoſt ſufficient to deſtroy the juſt prerogative of the crown. The poor King has had lately his own time with theſe party men, though

I am ſure he is a better man than the moſt of them.

An author of real impartiality will neither make uſe of illiberal abuſe, nor undiſtinguiſhed applauſe, when writing of the eſtabliſhed clergy of this kingdom. As men, he muſt ſuppoſe them liable to the weakneſs of humanity, and as taken from the common maſs of the people, he muſt alſo expect them to have contracted a part of the corruptions prevalent in the country where they lived. He would ſhew then ſome of them to be good, and ſome but juſt middling, like the moſt of thoſe around them. For he does not hold it as an univerſal maxim, that all men, on becoming clergymen, become alſo quite new creatures. No, no. This indeed the methodiſts aſſert of themſelves after their ſmart converſion; but he does not mind that. The fine mode of getting preferments in our church here he would not praiſe highly in every inſtance; for he is afraid that there is ſometimes dark work at the bottom, and that money has more power than merit. Sad caſe! A vote or two in parliament, a connection with a great man, a ſplice of little cunning, a happy compliance of principle, a ſmooth ſmirking manner, a quick turn at flattery, and the like, he would ſhew, in ſome caſes, to have each of them more effect than the greateſt virtue, talents, or learning. Such are the qualities that weigh in our Iriſh church. A clear token of the purity of the age. Yet he would exhibit, and with pleaſure, many famous exceptions to all this. For he feels no malicious joy, as is the faſhion now-a-days, in pointing out the faults and failings of the church-clergy of the kingdom. With all their defects, he might ſafely aſſert, they are at leaſt as good as thoſe of any other profeſſion. He might ſhew alſo, that the miniſters of our dear diſſenting brethren, are forced to have recourſe to many low tricks in ſtriving to *curry favour* with thoſe, who can get or give them votes. I remember one of theſe going once through a pariſh canvaſſing for a place, who ſaid to every old wife he could

ſee ſitting in the kitchen-corner, *Granny**, *how many kiſſes have you for me?* I could prove here, if it were neceſſary, that ſhould the people have the chooſing of the clergy to fill up the church livings, beſides the eternal confuſion, ſquabbles, brangles, and animoſities, that would then take place, means more corrupt would be made uſe of, and perſons more improper choſen, than are now by the preſent way of diſpoſing of them. But this is foreign to my purpoſe. Every mode of this ſort, formed by frail men, is ſtill ſubject to imperfections; but the defects neceſſarily inherent in its conſtitution muſt operate moſt ſtrongly in this our corrupted age.

Yet it muſt be owned, that much greater corruption is applied in procuring civil than eccleſiaſtical employments. This, every candid writer, who examines accurately into the conduct of mankind, muſt be ready to allow. But, as I ſaid above, it is the faſhion now to rail ſmartly at the corruptions of the church and the clergy. Bad men think that doing ſo ſerves to mitigate their vices, but here, when too late, they may be ſadly miſtaken. Indeed their reviling the miniſters of God is the ſureſt ſign of their wickedneſs. Both hiſtory and experience prove this to a certainty; for we find the moſt impious men are now, and ſtill have been loudeſt in their clamours againſt the clergy; and chiefly againſt thoſe eſtabliſhed by law, who, even now, I muſt ſay, taken in general, are a learned and reſpectable body of men. This furious outcry muſt not be aſcribed to any regard at all for religion, but juſt to the contrary. For they think, that ſetting the clergy in an odious point of view, will ſurely bring religion itſelf to diſrepute; and then their own vices they think, will ſeem leſs ſhocking to the world. At all this, I am ſorry to find, they are often too ſucceſsful.

It is curious to liſten to a country gentleman in the Houſe of Commons, lamenting in a melancholy way the great poverty of the kingdom, the oppreſſed ſtate

* *For Grannam.*

of the farmers, and the like, and then inſinuating that this is in a great degree owing to the rapacity of the clergy. They wiſh to ſhift the odium off themſelves, and clap it on the clergy, who have broad backs to bear it. But it would be juſt, as the ſaying is, *to put the ſaddle on the right horſe*, and ſhew the landlords themſelves are the oppreſſors. They ſcrew, I may ſay, the vitals out of their poor tenants. When their land is out of leaſe, they ſet it up to a ſort of auction, and give it to the higheſt bidder, without any regard to the old poſſeſſor; the poor creatures under them they ſcarce allow potatoes and ſalt to live on, and yet they cry out, *O, the clergy are the oppreſſors.*

In the laſt ſeſſion here, ſome gentlemen made uſe of a few ſmart expreſſions of this ſort againſt the clergy, when the ſecretary of ſtate introduced a bill into the Houſe of Commons, for the purpoſe of aſſiſting rectors, poor vicars, and curates to ſecure their houſes, and little property from the violent inſurgents of the ſouth. But the A——— G———, with great humanity, ſucceſsfully oppoſed it, after it had paſſed, I think, the firſt and ſecond readings. He then ſharply remarked, with his uſual pertneſs, "that the diſturbances in the ſouth were occaſioned by the exactions of the clergy, and that they ought to be corrected." I wiſh in my heart, (if he had ſome little religion) he was made a country vicar himſelf, and had nothing elſe to ſupport him, but what he could collect in ſheaves, and ſhillings, and eighteen pences, from a parcel of ſtiff preſbyterians, or papiſts, bitter enemies to the church. May be he would not talk then ſo much about the *exactions of the clergy*; and I muſt ſay many as good as he are engaged in this low office. He declared alſo in the H—— of C———, he would bring ſomething on church matters next ſeſſion into parliament. I hope, ſhould he do ſo, he will touch the ſubject with a very cautious hand; for it is a ſerious buſineſs. It is to be wiſhed too, that whoever takes the lead in this affair, (ſhould any one do it) may be a real believer in the religion of Jeſus Chriſt, and a ſtrict

a ſtrict attender on the public worſhip in our churches. Otherwiſe, I ſhould think, he muſt be an improper perſon to introduce any new regulations reſpecting the teachers of a religion, he himſelf renounces in his heart. While I am on the ſubject of the bill, the ſecretary of ſtate attempted to paſs laſt ſeſſion, I cannot omit mentioning with reſpect, a certain commiſſioner of the revenue, who, however exceptionable ſome may think him in his political conduct, ſpoke then in defence of the church with an honeſt boldneſs, that deſerves the thanks of every clergyman in the kingdom.

Theſe previous obſervations naturally lead me now to take ſome notice of the diſturbances in the ſouth of Ireland. Theſe of late have riſen to an amazing height in this unhappy country of ours, where all true ſenſe of religion is beginning to be nearly effaced.

The ſufferings of the clergy from the popiſh Right-Boys of the ſouth, one can ſcarce ſuppoſe to have happened in a chriſtian age and nation. They burned their hay-ſtacks, corn-ſtacks, or houſes. They cropped or houghed their cattle. They attempted their lives with charged guns when returning from church on the Lord's day. They broke into their houſes at midnight, and tore them naked out of their beds into the open air, then they clapt a cocked gun to their head, and placed horrid inſtruments of torture before their eyes, to make them ſwear to give them up their property. Their poor families then were almoſt frightened to death, imagining their parents or huſbands would ſurely be murdered by the armed ruffians. Others of them theſe ſavages beat and bruiſed, broke the ribs of their ſides, and drove out of their fields with ſticks and ſtones, though acting without a proctor, ſuitably to their orders; in this horrid condition they were glad to take ſhelter in their churches, where they ſpent dreary nights in conſtant expectation of loſing their lives. They broke into their ſtables, carried away their horſes, ſaddles and bridles, plundered their houſes, forced from them guns, gunpowder and money,

to

to ſupply their extravagancies, and to purchaſe ammunition to be employed with the guns, by this popiſh crew, for the deſtruction of the proteſtant peaceable inhabitants. They made them ſwear to give up to them their ſubſiſtence, and to ſurrender all their old tithe-notes; if not, they vowed with ſhocking imprecations, they would bury them alive, and threatened them with tortures, miſery and death. Thus the clergy loſt all their property. They intimidated veſtries from levying money to repair the churches, to pay the legal ſalary of the church officers, or to purchaſe elements for the holy communion. They broke open church-wardens houſes, ſearched for and tore the veſtry-applotments. They nailed up one church, they bound themſelves by an oath to burn another; they threatened horrid puniſhment on the clergy, if they *dared* to officiate. The clergy, terrified by their villanies, and by their conſtant threats of burying them alive, torturing their bodies, cropping their ears, cutting out their tongues, burning them at night in their houſes, and murdering them naked in their beds, fled away from their churches and dwellings. They were forced before this to publiſh notices, that they would humbly do what they deſired them, and willingly obey all their commands. But it did not avail. Thus the national worſhip of God was entirely put a ſtop to, and the whole country ſubject to the rule of a lawleſs rabble.

The perſons that aſſiſted the clergy to collect their juſt dues have been treated even more cruelly than themſelves. Some of them have been dragged out of their houſes by a number of ſavages, then ſtript naked, and torn with thorns and briers; others had their ears and noſes cut off; others had their breeches taken off, and their bare backſides clapt on a ſharp whin-buſh, placed on a horſe's back, in which horrible ſituation, racked with torture, they have been driven whole miles along, until all the ſkin would be torn off their a—s: others have been ſtripped ſtark naked, and buried up to the chin in a grave lined with prickly

prickly furze, and kept thus a whole night and day at once; and others have been abſolutely put to death, which was either immediately inflicted on them, or brought on by the cruel treatment they received. The circumſtances of barbarity attending ſome of theſe murders are ſhocking to relate. Some time laſt ſummer they cut off the ears of a poor tithe-farmer, and nailed them to a pump; the poor fellow complained of the hard uſage; for which theſe ſavages came to his houſe, and dragged him out of it before all his family, and took a ſword and clove his head in two, and then pulled his wife out of the houſe to ſee the mangled corpſe of her huſband. The wild Indians of America are ſaints in compariſon of theſe. The moſt of theſe poor creatures had their houſes, cornſtacks, and the like, burned about their ears. Their families then conſequently have been forced to go a begging for their bread. Captain Right and his crew threatened fire, houghing, death and deſtruction, againſt any farmer who would take his tithe *for any price whatſoever*, againſt any perſon who would buy tithe, or any one who would help the clergyman to draw his tithe, &c. The Captain's threats too are ſurely put in execution. It muſt ſhock humanity to hear of the ſufferings of the poor people, who happened in the leaſt to vary from his orders. God Almighty grant thoſe of them that are alive comfort in their calamity, for they ſeem to have none from this world. As for thoſe of them that were murdered, it is to be hoped they received mercy on their ſudden call.

The few honeſt magiſtrates (and theſe I find were very few) who ſtrove to bring any of theſe offenders to juſtice, were treated moſt ſeverely, or at leaſt forced to give large ſums of money to buy off their vengeance.

I take no notice of the oaths extorted by theſe Right Boys from the peaceable laity, with knives at their throats, or cocked piſtols at their heads, or of the horſes, arms, gunpowder and money they took from them by force, and the like, as theſe are ſmall crimes, when compared

compared to the reſt of their doings. Thus the moſt of the clergy in the South have been robbed laſt year of the only means of ſupport for themſelves and their families. The churches have been ſhut up, and the poor curates left to ſtarve. Such are the ravages of the Right-Boys, and ſuch their averſion from tithes and the clergy. All this the clergy have ſuffered for ſtriving to get their own, as alſo their poor proctors and tithe-viewers for daring to help them. Hard uſage to the miniſters of God from a wicked world. But whether the clergy have any blame or no in this affair, I will examine by and by. At preſent it may not be improper to inquire a little into the origin of tithes, and the uſes to which they were applied.

But I muſt ſay now, that my reaſoning here can have no effect with any, except with thoſe, who really believe the old and new teſtament to be the true revelation of God himſelf. As for the gentlemen deiſts who deny the holy ſcriptures, they certainly will laugh at me for mentioning them at all, becauſe they ſay, the whole is an impoſture. Any argument then, taken from theſe volumes, will paſs juſt for ſo much nonſenſe with theſe pretty gentry, whoſe quick eyes have ſeen into the cheat. However, I will apply to theſe gainſayers by another ſort of reaſoning.

By the word tithe in ſcripture is meant the tenth part of a man's goods, as well of cattle, as of the fruits of the earth. It is ſuppoſed that God Almighty communicated his commands reſpecting theſe to Adam himſelf. Be that as it may; the practice of paying tithes to the miniſters of God is one of the moſt ancient recorded in hiſtory. We are told in the book of Geneſis, (*a*) that Abraham, returning with the goods belonging to Lot his brother's ſon, which he had retaken from Lot's enemy the king of Elam, and from the other three kings joined with him in alliance, came in his way to Melchizedek king of Salem. This Mel-

(*a*) *Gen.* xiv. 20.

chizedek

chizedek *was the prieſt of the moſt high God*, and alſo, as the Apoſtle ſays, (*b*) the great type of our Saviour. This pious perſon received Abraham with kindneſs, bleſſed him, and offered up his thanks to God for giving him ſucceſs over his enemies. In return for this, as the ſacred hiſtorian informs us, *Abraham gave him tithes of all.* Jacob, in imitation of his Grandfather's piety, vowed to the Lord the tithe of all the goods he might acquire in Meſopotamia. *Of all that thou ſhalt give me, I will ſurely give the tenth unto thee.* (*c*) The Almighty himſelf informs us in Leviticus, *that all the tithe of the land, whether of the ſeed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree is the Lord's: it is holy unto the Lord. And as to the tithe of the herd, or of the flock, even of whatſoever paſſeth under the rod; the tenth ſhall be holy unto the Lord.* (*d*) This is the firſt time mention is made in the Jewiſh law about tithes, for which Moſes's giving no reaſon ſhows it was a pious uſage then all over the world. This tenth part of the goods, holy to the Lord, he afterwards beſtowed on the Levites, the lower Jewiſh prieſts. *Behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Iſrael for an inheritance, for their ſervice which they ſerve, even the ſervice of the tabernacle of the congregation.* (*e*) Theſe people, bad as they were in many inſtances, ſtill paid obedience to this command of God. For we are told, that *as ſoon as this commandment came abroad, the children of Iſrael brought in abundance the firſt fruits of corn, wine, oil, and honey, and of all the increaſe of the field, and the tithe of all things brought they in; and they that dwelt in the cities of Judah brought in the tithe of oxen, and ſheep, and the tithe of holy things, and laid them in heaps.* (*f*) It may be clearly ſhown from ſcripture, 1. that the people paid tithes to the levites, 2. that the levites paid tithes to the prieſts, 3, that the people paid tithes for the Lord's ſacrifices either in

(*b*) *Heb.* vii. (*c*) *Gen.* xxviii. 22. (*d*) *Levit.* xxvii. 30. 32. (*e*) *Num.* xviii. 21. (*f*) 2 *Chron.* xxxi. 5, 6.

kind or money, (g) 4, that a tithe alſo was paid every third year to the poor, which they were to eat at their own dwellings. (h) All this was done by the appointment of God himſelf, to whom every thing in this world here belongs, *for the earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is*.

Tithes were paid to God as a ſign of lowly homage and gratitude. Thus Abraham's giving tithes of the goods retaken to Melchizedek the prieſt of the moſt High, ſhowed, that he owned his victory and ſucceſs was owing to the favour of the Almighty. When the prieſts were cheated of their tithes, a practice very common now, the Lord complained that he himſelf was robbed. *Will a man rob God? Yet have ye robbed me? But ye ſay, wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are curſed with a curſe; for ye have robbed me.* (i) But Captain Right and his crew of hell-hounds think little of all this. The paying of tithes was conſidered as an honouring of God. *Honour the Lord with thy ſubſtance*, ſays Solomon, *and with the firſt fruits of all thy increaſe. So ſhall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy preſſes ſhall burſt out with new wine.* (k) The bleſſing of God would attend them when they did ſo. But many of our people here ſeem willing to forfeit this bleſſing. Yet, after all, the moſt of theſe prieſts were ſcarce better men than the generality of the eſtabliſhed clergy now. This, ſome of you may ſharply anſwer, is not ſaying much for them. It may be ſo.

The payment of tithes was an acknowledgment of ſpiritual ſuperiority in the perſon to whom they were given. Thus the Levite's paying tithes to the prieſts, was owning that the office of the latter was ſuperior to theirs. Hence the Apoſtle proves the ſuperiority of Melchizedek and his prieſthood, above Abraham and the prieſthood of Levi, becauſe Abraham, and (if he may uſe the expreſſion) Levi in his loins paid *tithes* to

(g) *Deut.* xiv. 22. &c. (h) *Deut.* xiv. 28. &c.
(i) *Mal.* iii. 8. 9. (k) *Prov.* iii. 9. 10.

him

him as the leſſer to the greater. (l) I have thus fully proved the divine right of tithes. This way of arguing, however, will, I am afraid, be little attended to by the moſt of the world.

The moſt barbarous nations, and even the heathen Greeks and Romans, moved by a principle of religion common to all men, have often devoted their tithes to their Gods. Hence Captain Right and the Right-Boys ſhow themſelves to be greater heathens and barbarians than theſe. Indeed I ſhould be aſhamed to compare an honeſt heathen to one of ſuch ruffians. Varro tells us, that Mezentius was called *Contemtor Divum*, becauſe he made his ſubjects pay him their firſt fruits, and the firſtlings of their flocks, which were formerly given to the Gods. Some of theſe nations conſidered themſelves as bound conſtantly to pay tithes; others paid them only on particular occaſions, and by the impulſe of a tranſient devotion. I wiſh the wicked inſurgents of the South would take a pious fit of this kind; we might then have ſome hopes of their amendment. Laertius ſays, that Piſiſtratus the Tyrant of Athens, writing to Solon to perſuade him to return to that city, aſſured him, that every one there paid tithes of his goods, for the purpoſe of offering up ſacrifices to the Gods. (m) Pliny ſays, that the Arabian merchants, who traded in ſpices, durſt not ſell any of them, till they firſt had paid the tithe to their God Sabis. And Plutarch in many places makes mention of a cuſtom among the Romans, of offering to Hercules the tithe of ſpoil taken from the enemy. Thus ſacred and profane antiquity, the commands of God himſelf, the practice of the patriarchs, of the Jews, of the heathen Greeks, Romans and Barbarians, all tend to ſanctify the uſual cuſtom of paying tithes to the prieſts or miniſters of God.

In the New Teſtament, neither our Saviour nor his apoſtles, it is true, ſay any thing particular reſpecting

(l) *Heb.* vii. 4. 5. 6. *&c.* (m) *Laer. lib.* 1.

the affair of tithes. It would have been needleſs in theſe to have enjoined a regular mode of payment for the chriſtian clergy, who, with their people, were to be objects of violent perſecution for near three hundred years. Our bleſſed Lord, indeed, when he ſent out his apoſtles to preach the goſpel through the cities of Iſrael, ſtrictly ordered them to take neither money nor proviſions along with them, but to eat what was ſet before them in the houſes of thoſe who were willing to receive them; *for*, he ſays, *the labourer is worthy of his hire.* (*n*) In another part he ſays, *ye Scribes, Phariſees, Hypocrites, pay tithe of mint, and aniſe, and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith, theſe ought you to have done and not leave the other undone.* (*o*) By this it appears, he thought they were obliged as well to pay tithe, as to obſerve the moral law. The Apoſtle Paul alſo ſays, that as God under the law appointed a particular maintenance for his miniſters, *ſo the Lord has ordained that they who preach the goſpel ſhould live of the goſpel.* (*p*) For, as he remarks a little before, *who goeth a warfare at his own charge?* Reaſon and common honeſty alſo tell us, that they, who, in preparing for the clerical office, have paſſed their youth at a long, toilſome, and expenſive mode of education, and at laſt devoted their lives to the ſpiritual inſtruction of their brethren, ſhould receive a ſuitable recompence from thoſe, for whoſe ſake they quit every other road that leads to wealth or honour.

But the Apoſtle does not lay out any mode by which the clergy ſhould be paid. And juſtly too, as it muſt evidently appear. The chriſtian church, as I ſaid above, was perſecuted at intervals for almoſt three hundred years, until our holy religion was eſtabliſhed by the Emperor Conſtantine the Great. The Roman Empire, however, was verging towards its ruin, at the

(*n*) *Luke*, x. 7. (*o*) *Math.* xxii. 23. (*p*) 1 *Cor.* ix. 9. 14.

time

time chriſtianity became the reigning religion of the ſtate. Its nerves then were relaxed, its ſtrength decayed, its morals depraved, its patriotic virtue fled, and its extremities aſſailed by hardy barbarians. After many a ſharp conflict, theſe barbarous nations gradually made their way, by the dint of the ſword, through every quarter of the Imperial dominions. In a little more than a hundred years after chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed by Conſtantine, the weſtern empire was deſtroyed by the furious barbarians of the north. Theſe wild invaders, on their ſucceſs, ſpread tumult and barbariſm over Europe, which laſted, without the leaſt intermiſſion, for above three centuries, to the time of the great Charlemagne. Hence, as I mentioned partly before, there appears a probable reaſon for our Saviour's and his Apoſtle's not directing any particular mode of maintenance for the clergy under the goſpel. They muſt have known by the ſpirit of prophecy, that the chriſtian church was to be perſecuted for near three centuries, that ſoon after the eſtabliſhment of our religion by Conſtantine, the whole Empire was to be in confuſion, till its final ruin by the barbarians, (a period of about one hundred and ſixty years) and that, ſubſequent to this famous event, wild diſturbance was inceſſantly to prevail over Europe for three centuries more. Conſequently, our Saviour and his Apoſtles muſt have ſeen, that even ſuppoſe they had appointed the payment of tithes, or the like, for the decent ſupport of the chriſtian clergy, it could not have taken place, with any ſort of regularity, for almoſt eight hundred years. Beſides, it was neceſſary that the ſpirit of the goſpel, which was intended to ſuit the circumſtances of every nation in the world, ſhould be much more univerſal than that of the Jewiſh religion, which was deſigned only for a particular people, place, and time.

Chriſtian princes perceiving in the old Teſtament, that God Almighty, had laid out the tithes for the ſupport of the prieſts under the law, wiſely thought fit to appoint the ſame mode of maintenance for the clergy under

under the goſpel, eſpecially as it was ſanctioned by the commands of the Great Author of the world. Tithes were eſtabliſhed through his extenſive dominions, by the immortal Emperor Charlemagne, the wonder of his age, the friend of genius, literature, and religion. They took place in England, Judge Blackſtone thinks, "about the end of the ſixth century, at the planting of chriſtianity among the Saxons." In Ireland, it is thought, before that time. "The firſt mention of them in any Engliſh written law, is in a conſtitutional decree made in a ſynod held A. D. 786, wherein the payment of tithes in general is ſtrongly enjoined. This canon, or decree, was effectually confirmed by two kingdoms of the heptarchy, in their parliamentary conventions of eſtates, reſpectively conſiſting of the kings of Mercia and Northumberland, the biſhops, dukes, ſenators and people." *(q)* However, without reciting the various legal proofs in ſupport of tithes, it may be ſufficient to remark, that the payment of theſe to the clergy, is required by cuſtoms and ſtatute laws, of at leaſt nine hundred years ſtanding. Therefore, the title of the clergy of this kingdom to tithes, is of ſo long continuance. Can any landlord of them all ſhew one ſo old? Hence it follows, that every landlord, either he who purchaſed his eſtate, or he who received it by a gift from the crown, or otherwiſe, always obtained it ſubject by the conſtitution to the payment of tithes. If he or his anceſtors purchaſed it, it was gotten on that account ſo much cheaper. The property of land, in a long ſeries of years, is neceſſarily ſhifted through many hands. Yet, on every change of this ſort, the tithe was ſtill reſerved by the laws for the clergy. It appears now, the eſtabliſhed clergyman has as good a title to his tithe, as the landlord has to his rent, ſince the tithe and rent are ſecured alike to each, by the

(q) I tranſcribe here Judge Blackſtone's own words, whoſe ſtile is ſo clear and elegant as to need no amendment.

power

power of the ſame conſtitution. I may ſay too, he has a better title, for many reaſons: firſt, it is of longer continuance; ſecondly, it requires no proof; thirdly, his tithe is due of common right, and not liable to be injured by preſcription; fourthly, no other perſon has a ſhadow of claim to it; fifthly, the clergy's property is more ſecure than that of the laity, for the lands of a layman, guilty of treaſon, revert to the crown; but the property of a clergyman, guilty of the ſame crime, deſcends entire to his ſucceſſor. It follows now, that the landlord on ſetting his land to his tenants, could not alſo ſet the tithes, ſince they were not his property, and, therefore, the tenants are bound to pay theſe to the clergyman, to whom they juſtly belong. On this account, they got their farms ſo much cheaper, as the landlord did his land on purchaſing it. Each has received a ſufficient recompenſe for ſubmitting to tithe. Conſequently, neither of them, in law and juſtice, has a better right to the tithe of his land, than he has to the property of any other man.

Hence it follows, that cheating the clergyman of his tithes, a practice common to both landlords and tenants, is, at leaſt, as great a piece of roguery, as cheating any other man of his lawful property. It may be, that doing ſo to the clergy, may appear a greater ſin in the eyes of that Being, whoſe miniſters they are. But I do not inſiſt on this. Every deiſt, who underſtands or regards the nature of right and wrong, muſt acknowledge the force of this argument. A footpad, who comes up to him in the ſtreet, and robs him of his money, he will ſtrive to get hanged for the crime. And muſt he not think, that the perſon or perſons who rob the clergy of their tithe, are equally deſerving of the ſame fate? Becauſe the tithe is as much their property, as the money is his.

If, indeed, a law ſhould be paſſed for aboliſhing the chriſtian religion, and, of conſequence, for deſtroying the eſtabliſhed church, (which, when we conſider the preſent ſentiments of men, ſeems by no means improbable) in that caſe, the property of the eſtabliſhed cler-

gy

gy would be cut off at one ſtroke. Thoſe of the clergy then in being would enjoy, I ſuppoſe, the benefit of their reſpective livings, until they died, and then, the emoluments, each of theſe poſſeſſed, while alive, would be applied, after his death, to ſome more uſeful purpoſe appointed by the wiſdom of parliament. To paſs, however, a bill of this ſort into a law, would be juſt tearing up the conſtitution by the roots; it would be acting in direct oppoſition to the expreſs words of magna charta, the firſt clauſe of which is to confirm the inviolable rights of the church. I know not indeed how the King, conſiſtently with the oath he has taken, could give his conſent to a bill of this kind; for he ſwore at his coronation, to defend and protect the eſtabliſhed proteſtant church in all its rights. But we muſt ſuppoſe, that immediately on this bill's paſſing our Lords and Commons, all ſenſe of religion, and of the ſanctity of an oath, would be entirely effaced from the breaſt of every human creature in theſe kingdoms. Conſequently, the King himſelf would experience alſo this ſame happy change, which would be ſomewhat remarkable in his Majeſty, ſince he ſeems at preſent to entertain very juſt notions of religion. If this were the caſe, there would be no longer any dread among us either of temporal or eternal puniſhment, for breaking the moſt ſolemn oaths, and for ſeriouſly and publickly aſſerting the moſt odious falſehoods. Indeed, all the ties of fidelity, by which religion binds man to man, would then be looſed; and how much ſociety would be benefited by all this. I leave to our wiſe politicians to determine. This much, however, I think I have proved, that the preſent property of the eſtabliſhed clergy cannot, with even the colour of juſtice, be taken from them, unleſs a bill of this nature be paſſed into a law.

It may be ſaid, that the clergy do not do enough for their tithes. But I may ſay, in reply to this, that thoſe of them who do leaſt, generally do as much as the landlords do for their rents. And others of them,

God

God knows, do much more than ever they receive a ſuitable return for in any particular. The regular clergy of the kingdom have, it muſt be owned, an important charge committed to their truſt They are choſen to be the eſtabliſhed inſtructers of the people in the awful duties of religion. They are appointed to explain to them the nature of the threats and promiſes of the goſpel, to tell them they muſt be uſeful, honeſt, and peaceable members of ſociety here, if they hope to be happy hereafter. Their office binds them to communicate their good advice to them both in public and private, to viſit them in their ſickneſs and ſorrow, to ſet them a good example, to exerciſe hoſpitality, to inquire into the ſtate of the poor, and to give as much as they can reaſonably afford for their relief. They are uſeful often in ſettling diſputes, and adminiſtering juſtice, for which many of them are at leaſt as well qualified as the moſt of country gentlemen. Indeed the duties of their ſtations are ſo various and important, that I cannot, conſiſtently with my plan, point them out particularly now.

Every one, even the moſt prejudiced, muſt allow, that theſe do more for their tithes than abſentee landlords do for their rents, who, reſiding in another kingdom, and carrying all their money there, leave their poor tenants here to be racked and harraſſed by mercileſs agents, and infamous land-jobbers. Thoſe alſo, who conſtantly live in the metropolis, or in places at a diſtance from their tenants, are generally of no more uſe to theſe than if they took up their quarters in another part of the kingdom. The landlords who ſpend a part or almoſt the whole of their time among their tenants in hunting foxes and hares, and running after horſes and hounds, and the like, (the uſual employment of ſuch gentlemen) ſeldom, I muſt ſay, do as much good to ſociety as honeſt country clergymen, who inſtruct their people in the ways that are pleaſing to God, and uſeful to man. The reſiding of landlords near their reſpective tenants, ſerves often to give them more opportunities of oppreſſing them. They ſee

thoſe of them that flouriſh, and often ſtrive to fleece them accordingly. It is uſual for them to ſay of a tenant that has gathered ſome little pence by the dint of labour and induſtry; "damn him, that fellow is rich, he can afford to pay me more." And he generally tries what he can to make him do ſo. I have often heard decent diſcreet tenants declare, that they never wiſhed their landlords to live too near them. They uſually alſo make their poor tenants pull down their ditches for the convenience of their own hunting, which is ſacrificing their intereſts to their own pleaſure. They alſo force them to give them duty-days, and the like. Indeed, the vaſſalage of the lower tenants in many parts of Ireland, is as miſerable as that of the poor peaſants in Poland. Their condition is worſe than that of the *Gibeonites* of old, who were condemned to be *hewers of wood and drawers of water* all their days. It muſt be obſerved, that I only ſpeak here of landlords in general, as there are many of theſe, worthy good men, whoſe names I could mention with pleaſure, that have been of real ſervice to their tenants and to the nation. If I were inclined, I might here alſo form a cenſure or panegyric, according to my humour, on public men and meaſures; but I do not think it is the part of ſuch a perſon as I am, to make any remarks on members of parliament, or on the honours and emoluments they enjoy in return for their uſeful labours; nor do I wiſh, indeed, to enter on a ſubject ſo nice as this, leſt I ſhould be guilty of ſpeaking ſcandal, a fault I ſhall endeavour always to avoid. From what I have ſaid, it muſt appear, that the landlords, taken in general, do not do as much for their rents, as the eſtabliſhed clergy do for their tithes, ſince the one's buſineſs is laborious and uſeful, but the other's, often idle diverſion. Hence it follows. that the clergy have a better right to their tithes, than the landlords have to their rents, becauſe they do more to deſerve them; their title to them is better, and of longer continuance.

It may be ſaid, there are rich pluraliſts, living on the fat of the land, who poſſeſs many fine benefices, and go about through the world taking their pleaſure, without paying any regard to the ſouls or bodies of their flocks. This, I confeſs, in ſome inſtances is the caſe, and I look on it as a nuiſance in a chriſtian country, which ſhould, if poſſible, be removed, For I never will ſtand up as an advocate for the corruptions of the church. This would be acting the part of a hireling, not that of a man of honour and impartiality. Theſe, however, are but few in compariſon of the uſeful laborious clergymen: and, it is to be hoped, that many of theſe are men of great and ſplendid merit, in favour of whom there have always been exceptions in every age. And I am ſure, my dear countrymen would never take it ill, to ſee men of learning, genius, and virtue raiſed high in the church.

Having proved now, beyond the poſſibility of doubt, the right of the clergy to the tithe, I ſhall next inquire if, on the whole, tithe be really a grievance. Many lazy, roguiſh people, often think it a grievance to pay their juſt debts; and theſe, I dare ſay, will be ready to bawl out, that tithes are a ſhocking terrible grievance. But this is no argnment. I have ſhewn already, that the payment of tithes to the eſtabliſhed clergy of this kingdom, is at leaſt of eight hundred years continuance; ſo that if it be a grievance, it is not a grievance of yeſterday. It is a grievance, under which England has advanced to its preſent ſtate of wealth, power and dignity. A grievance, ſignifies an unjuſt painful load, placed on people's ſhoulders. But tithe ſurely cannot be unjuſt, as it is ſanctioned by cuſtoms or laws of ſo long ſtanding. It cannot alſo be painful or oppreſſive, becauſe, if it were ſo, it would long ſince have been more univerſally cried out againſt in both kingdoms, and on the continent. Beſides, to call it a grievance, is to accuſe God Almighty of cruelty and injuſtice, as he firſt ordered it to be paid to his prieſts: Yet many of our newfangled gentry,

no doubt, think magna charta itſelf a grievance, becauſe payment of tithes is an eſſential part of it. But if every factious light-headed perſon, fond of novelty, were allowed to fritter away one part after another off our happy conſtitution; God only knows, whether any at all of it would remain for us. Now, whether or no, it would be better to keep it as it is, or to adopt one patched up by ſuch coblers as theſe, I leave to all ſober people to determine. The enforcing alſo the payment of tithes, cannot be called unjuſt, becauſe it is only enforcing the payment of a juſt debt. No one would blame a ſhop-keeper for ſtriving to recover his juſt debts by law, and why ſhould they blame a clergyman for ſtriving to do the ſame? This is plain reaſoning, eaſy to be underſtood by every one of common ſenſe. If any one think the clergyman aſks too much for his tithe, all he has to do in that caſe is, to let him take it in kind, and then there can be no more diſpute.

It appears now by this mode of argument, that even the clergy's enforcing the payment of the full value of their tithes, cannot, in ſtrict juſtice, be called a grievance. But it is allowed, that they ſcarce get more than a third part of the real value of them. In the county of Antrim, which is moſtly inhabited by preſbyterians, many of whom are bitter enemies to our church, the clergy ſeldom get ſo much. This, every one who knows any thing of that county, candidly owns. The people there are extremely factious, and are continually thwarting and vexing the eſtabliſhed clergy, and forming combinations againſt them, as the journeymen tailors in Dublin do againſt their employers: So that if the clergyman do not take them upon their own terms, which by the by, are not the moſt reaſonable, he will get nothing from them at all. This inclination to cheat the eſtabliſhed clergy, prevails univerſally over the kingdom; in ſome places more, in others leſs. Every common farmer knows the method of plaguing, and vexing, and ſtanding out againſt the clergyman or his proctor. He has every

advantage

advantage over him he could wiſh, and always makes uſe of it. He knows all the tricks of dealing, while the clergyman poſſibly only knows books. If, then, he can pluck a part of his dues from him *by hook or by crook*, he is very well ſatisfied. Often the whole pariſh, through hatred to the eſtabliſhed church, form a combination againſt the clergyman, and make him take what they pleaſe. This has conſtantly been the practice in the pariſh of Killileagh, in the county of Down. It is inhabited almoſt entirely by a ſet of deſperate preſbyterians, who, like ſome in that way, look on the church of England as ſuperſtitious and idolatrous, and would be happy to ſee it deſtroyed; for they ſay, it would be ſo much iniquity taken out of the land. Such is their judgment of things. The tithes of the pariſh of Killileagh, according to the uſual mode of ſetting tithes, would amount to £600 a-year, and yet this pariſh pays no more to the church clergyman than £150 a-year. It is at leaſt five miles long, and five broad, and conſiſts of finely cultivated land, covered in a manner all over with large crops of wheat and oats.

What is uſually meant by forming combinations, or ſtanding out againſt the clergyman, is this. The whole pariſh hold a general meeting, and there piouſly reſolve to offer the clergyman, during his incumbency, ſome trifle yearly in lieu of his tithe. If he chooſe to agree to their terms, it is well; if not, they will all ſummon him to draw them, probably on the ſame day, and then the poor clergyman will be plagued *out of his life*, in ſtriving to procure horſes and men for this purpoſe. But he will not be able, with all his toil and trouble, to get as many as will bring home to him the thirtieth part of the tithe, which will be nearly eat up by thoſe he hired to draw it. Then, if any of the horſes he employs happen to taſte a blade of graſs in the man's field, from whom he is getting the tithe, the man will immediately clap the horſe in the pound, and make the clergyman pay ſmartly for treſpaſs. If any man ſhould chance luckily

luckily to have fields within thoſe of another, to which there is no road except through thoſe of that other perſon, he uſually pays no tithe for theſe at all, becauſe the other man will ſurely not allow the clergyman's horſes and men a paſſage through his land, to get his neighbour's tithe. If any of the pariſhioners dare to agree with the clergyman about his tithe, contrary to the orders of the reſt, they will certainly burn his houſe and haggard, as the Right-Boys do in Munſter. Often too, they clap a coal to the clergyman's own hay-ſtacks and corn-ſtacks, and burn them to the ground. All this they call forming a combination againſt the clergyman. There is alſo another ſort of combination-making, which takes place when the people all contribute their ſeveral ſhares of money, each in proportion to his abilities, and then put the whole into a ſtock-purſe, with which they employ lawyers againſt the clergyman, who is thus robbed by theſe harpies, of a large part of his due, for want of money enough to engage others of the ſame craft to oppoſe them. Many of our northern ſaints will not allow the clergyman's agents to view their fields at all, but drive them away with ſticks and ſtones. The county of Antrim ſectaries, whoſe ſpecies is very various, are noted for this. They are not content to be tolerated in the open uſe of their own moſt pure and perfect mode of worſhip, (a privilege, diſſenters in almoſt all other kingdoms would be happy to enjoy) but they muſt do all they can to deſtroy the eſtabliſhed church. However, I muſt ſuppoſe all this to be conſiſtent with ſtrict equity, juſtice and propriety, otherwiſe, ſuch holy perſons, of ſuch great and ſolemn gravity of countenance, would ſurely not do it. But there are many reſpectable preſbyterians there, of more liberal ſentiments.

It is the caſe all over the kingdom, that the landlords or men of power in a pariſh, muſt ſtill get their tithe *for a ſong*, as the ſaying is, to keep them in good humour; if not, they would ſoon excite the people to combine againſt the clergyman, which, to give them

their

their due, they are generally well enough inclined to do of themſelves. Such is their love of good order, honeſty, and religion. Indeed, the clergyman finds himſelf ſo plagued by one and another of them, that he is often glad to take at laſt any thing they pleaſe to allow him, to keep ſoul and body together. Poor vicars, and the like, more uſually meet with this hard treatment, than the rich rectors, or high dignitaries. As theſe latter, being more on a level with the men of influence in the pariſh, can keep them in temper by dinners, and wine, and ſome little gratuities. But the former poor creatures have none of theſe to give; and a man of fortune, who is not overſtocked with religion, generally looks with contempt on a hungry vicar, coming up to him bowing and cringing. For, however oppoſitely mankind act in other particulars to the precepts of the goſpel, the greater number of them ſtrive, literally to fulfil the words of our Saviour, where he ſays, *He who has little, ſhall have taken from him, even that little which he ſeems to have.*

It muſt appear now from what has been ſaid, that the eſtabliſhed clergyman, from the peculiar circumſtances of his condition, can ſeldom or never get nearly the value of his tithe from the people. Beſides the injuries and affronts he meets with from rich and great men, he is liable to be plagued by every common farmer, who can vex and cheat him, without any dread of puniſhment for it in this world. He generally thinks he comes well off, if he be paid, on the ſucceeding harveſt, the money promiſed him for tithe on the harveſt before, ſo that at beſt he muſt be out of it a twelvemonth, which, if he be poor, and his living ſmall, is ſenſibly felt by himſelf, his wife, and children. I take no notice here of the great trouble he is frequently put to in ſtriving to recover his juſt debts, and of the vaſt number of theſe he muſt neceſſarily loſe.

Now, the queſtion is, ſuppoſe the tithes, however unjuſtly, were taken away from the clergy, according to the wiſhes of ſome people, would the poor, the farmer,

mer, and the country in general experience any advantage from it? I anſwer no; becauſe it would be only in fact transferring the tithes from the hands of the clergy to thoſe of the landlords, who would have it in their power to force their tenants ſtrictly to pay the full value of them; which, as I have proved already, the clergy cannot poſſibly do. That the benefit in that caſe would accrue entirely to the landlord, appears from this, that lands tithe-free (an injuſtice how effected, I ſhall not inquire now) are raiſed proportionably in their rent. I appeal to every one's experience for the truth of this. The landlord, who has lands thus circumſtanced, uſually charges ſeparately for the rent and the tithe; ſo much an acre for rent, and ſo much for tithe. Some of theſe even force their tenants to draw the tithe of all their crops, with their own horſes, to particular places, they themſelves appoint for their own convenience. Now I aſk, would it not be better for theſe they had to deal with the clergy? Inſtead of giving the clergyman horſes to draw his tithe from them, as they do to the landlord, they would clap his horſes into the pound, if they ſhould happen to taſte a blade of their graſs. For they have nothing to fear from him, but a great deal to fear from the landlord. The landlord, if he chooſe to take the tithe in money, can drive his tenant's cattle for it as well as for the rent; but the clergyman cannot drive a cow for his tithe; no, no. He muſt have recourſe to a law-proceſs for it, or the biſhop's court, a tedious, troubleſome, and uncertain mode of recovery. Hence it follows, that if the tithe, by ſome act of robbery, were taken away from the clergy, it would be put into the hands of the landlords, who would have it in their power ſtrictly to enforce the payment of the full value of it, which, as it appears, the clergy can never do. Then the poor tenants would have but very few words in ſettling about their tithe with their landlord. If he did not chooſe to take it in kind, he would require each of them to pay ſo much money for it, and they muſt agree to his propoſal.

If not, let them mark the conſequence. They dare not then wrangle, or prig with him, or plague him, or beat him down of his terms, as they do the clergyman, for he would not be troubled with their noiſe, becauſe he would have the remedy in his own hand. Let the landlord aſk what he pleaſes, they muſt ſubmit. *Durum telum neceſſitas.* They would know then to their coſt, that their rents, on the whole, would be raiſed much higher in proportion than what they pay now for their tithes: which, upon a ſtrict and impartial inquiry over the whole kingdom, would be found, I am ſure to be, by no means, a juſt object of complaint. Becauſe, the clergy ſcarce get more than a third part of the real value of them, though the whole is, as I have proved, their due. Whence then you may ſay, ariſe the diſturbances in the ſouth of Ireland? This, I think I can account for.

The Southern part of this kingdom, though generally conſiſting of as fine land as in the world, by a pernicious ſort of management, is ſuffered to lie in a manner waſte and uncultivated. It is moſtly divided into portions for grazing, from two hundred, to at leaſt two thouſand acres each. The perſons who generally rent theſe portions from the head landlords, are called graziers. One of theſe graziers often rents different portions of theſe, in ſeparate places. There are alſo many dairy-men in thoſe parts, who hold in their hands large quantities of paſture-land, on which they feed milk-cows to produce butter for ſale. Few induſtrious farmers are to be found there, who, poſſeſſing great farms, carefully cultivate them, and thus cauſe them abundantly to produce crops of various ſorts. The moſt of the people there are cottagers, peaſants, herdſmen, beggars, idlers, boxers, rioters, plunderers, and the like. The landlords of thoſe parts are in general abſentees, or gentlemen who reſide moſtly in other quarters of the kingdom; ſo that the people are thus left without any heads to rule or reſtrain them. Theſe abſentees, the ruin of the nation, uſually ſet their lands in large quantities to rich

graziers, or to land-pirates, or land-jobbers, as they are called, which latter ſet them again in ſmall parcels to poor wretches at rack rents. The graziers, alſo, ſet often little ſcraps of one or two acres each, about the ſkirts of their grazing farms, to ſome creatures who take care of their cattle. Theſe, and ſuch as theſe, are called cottagers, who plant the greater part of their ſcraps with potatoes, which, with water and a little whiſkey now and then, are their chief ſubſiſtence. The reſt of the head-landlords uſually follow the practice of the abſentees. There are, to be ſure, many farmers of various ſorts in Munſter, but the body of the people are thoſe I have mentioned. So great is their love of idleneſs, which is natural to the original Iriſh, that the farmers there, as ſoon as they can get a ſufficient ſtock of cattle, uſually quit tillage, and turn their farms to grazing. To complete all, there are few or no manufactures in thoſe parts; ſo that you would ſcarce ſee a loom, wheel, or reel, for an extent of ſixty miles. Hence it appears, that the body of the people there have little or nothing to do. The low farmers and cottagers can cultivate their ſcraps in a ſhort time, and after that, they may roam at large over the country. They have hundreds of idlers and rioters to join them; and both are free from all reſtraint, as there are no gentlemen of power and principle to keep them in order. Herdſmen and the like, lead alſo an idle life, and are ready to follow the word of command. Idleneſs is the nurſery of vice, and produces its baneful effects among them. Whiſkey and other ſpirits, which are cheap on account of private ſtills and ſmugling, help alſo to increaſe their diſorder. When they meet together at their fairs, their patterns, or their hurling-matches, they are juſt like ſo many devils let looſe from hell. Thievery, robbery, plundering, raviſhing of women, and murder, are vices common in thoſe parts. The villains too, generally eſcape unpuniſhed. I heard of three murders openly committed there laſt ſummer, in one and the ſame place, and yet the murderers were allowed

allowed to walk about as uſual. The laws are ſet at defiance, for there is no one to put them in force. And indeed every ſober perſon wiſhes to keep on good terms with theſe free-booters, to ſave, if it be poſſible, his perſon and property. They have nothing to do but contrive and execute miſchief, which is always the effect of idleneſs. They all to a man profeſs the popiſh religion, that gives ſuch power of forgiveneſs to the prieſts, and ſubſtitutes the obſervance of outward forms in the place of ſtrictly virtuous and regular conduct. The Iriſh language is commonly ſpoken among them, which helps to continue their barbariſm. I could wiſh in my heart and ſoul this abominable jargon was aboliſhed. Dean Swift alſo did the ſame. I have now ſhown whence proceeds the ſpirit of diſorder in the ſouthern parts of this kingdom.

Yet let no one imagine that all the lower ſort of people in Munſter are ſuch as I have deſcribed; many, very many of them are poor oppreſſed quiet creatures, that toil eternally for their wicked unconſcionable landlords, who ſcarce allow them potatoes and ſalt for their ſubſiſtence. Theſe generally are a prey both to the White-Boys, and to their landlords. After they have ſet their own little potatoe-plots, they wiſh to make a little food by working for others; but the White Boys, by their curſed regulations, will not allow them even to do this. They forbad them, upon any occaſion, if it were even to ſave the harveſt, to work out of their own pariſhes; (a thing often neceſſary on account of the ſcarcity of tillage) ſo that by this they were kept unemployed, and conſequently in a manner ſtarving, both themſelves and their families. For they cannot get money as eaſily as the Right-boys do. Many induſtrious farmers too were ſenſibly injured for want of hands to ſave their corn from the inclemency of the weather, and to dig up their potatoes at a proper ſeaſon. Thus the ſober, uſeful, and laborious part of the people were nearly ruined by theſe deſperate rioters, who ſeem to be the

only law-makers in the country. And God knows it is a happy country that is ruled by ſuch a banditti.

But the White-Boys, though wicked and factious of themſelves, have been partly rouſed of late, as I hear, to their horrid doings by their landlords or ſuperiors, a ſet of graziers, land-jobbers, agents, and little country-ſquires. Theſe are ſo many petty tyrants in their own way, who, ſpending their time in whoring, drinking, ſport, riot and oppreſſion, are void of every principle of religion, and conſequently enemies to the clergy. Theſe gentry have the mob in their power, as could be eaſily ſhown, and make uſe of them as tools to execute their vengeance. They helped then to drive theſe papiſts on, (who are naturally fond of it,) like ſo many blood-hounds, at the clergy; with whom it ſeems their honours are highly offended, becauſe they had the aſſurance to vote at the laſt election contrary to their deſire. They were headed in this pious work by a certain man of rank and fortune, who was the chief inſtigator of the whole. He planned the ruin of the clergy with dark and wicked artifice, and I am ſure the Devil with his club-foot was ſitting all the while at his elbow, prompting him on to his wickedneſs, that he might get him at laſt ſoul and body to himſelf. If it were conſiſtent with charity, I could wiſh he would take him in time, before he would do more harm to the world. This is the chief cauſe of the ſufferings of the clergy from Captain Right and his crew of myrmidons. But the Captain and his men ſay now they are not quite ſo angry on account of tithes, as on account of high rents and taxes, ſuch as hearth-money and the like. I believe them here, for I am ſure they have not ſo much reaſon. They muſt therefore, they ſay, have new laws made ſuitable to their commands.

But we are told in the public newſpapers, that the clergy of the eſtabliſhed church in the ſouthern parts of Ireland are amazingly avaricious men, who charge an exorbitant price for their tithes. The whole of this I am ſure is not true. For the clergy there, like

the

the reſt in the kingdom, are taken out of the common body of the people, and therefore we muſt ſuppoſe them to be juſt of the ſame caſt with the others. If they charge more there for tithes than in ſome other parts, which I am not ſure of, it cannot be wholly aſcribed to avarice. Becauſe, from the nature of the country, they may be forced to do ſo in order to provide a ſubſiſtence for themſelves and families. It may be juſtly allowed, that in that country near eight parts out of ten conſiſt of paſture land, which is rented by graziers, who generally ſtock it with black cattle. For theſe black cattle the grazier formerly paid a ſort of tithe which was called agiſtment. It extended from a ſhilling to two ſhillings Iriſh a head for each according to the age of the cattle. This ſort of tithe is now cheerfully paid to the clergy in England, and is expreſsly allowed by our happy conſtitution. Judge Blackſtone ſays, that " tithes are to be paid for corn, hay, fruit, cattle, poultry, and the like." Indeed, if the people of Ireland would take time impartially to conſider, how many products and even occupations are ſubject to a kind of tithe in England, which is not required by the clergy of this kingdom, they could not ſurely be ſo wickedly furious in their attempts to defraud theſe clergy of the ſmall portion they are content to take in lieu of the whole. (*r*) The juſtice, however, of paying tithe-agiſtment in Ireland muſt clearly appear to every ſober perſon. The ſouthern parts of this kingdom are, as I ſaid before, moſtly occupied by graziers. Theſe poſſeſs whole tracts of land, and let them lie in a ſtate of nature without cultivation. This is almoſt as great an injury as can happen to any country. It is preventing the ground from producing thoſe fruits, for the ſuſtenance of man,

(*r*) *See a pamphlet lately publiſhed, entitled " an Impartial Diſcuſſion of the Subject of Tithes;" where the author draws a parallel between the tithes cheerfully paid in England, and thoſe reluctantly paid in Ireland.*

which

which God Almighty intended. For cattle ſurely is not ſo neceſſary an article of life as corn or potatoes. It is refuſing to ſeek for thoſe goods, which the Creator of the world has offered to man on the exerciſe of a reaſonable induſtry. The human race are always baniſhed wherever cattle too much abound. They occupy the ſpace of the globe that God in his wiſdom, has appointed to be inhabited by man. Men only in their moſt rude and ſavage ſtate neglect to cultivate the ground. As ſoon as they join together in ſociety, they ſee the neceſſity of agriculture; their wants excite them to it, and if they have any regard to their own intereſts, they muſt ſurely put it in practice. If they do not, they are ſtill in a wild ſtate of nature. It is needleſs to mention here the laws made by many wiſe nations for diſcouraging paſturage and encouraging tillage. England, even in the reign of James I. was moſtly laid out in paſture, to which men are naturally inclined, as it helps to keep them idle. Lord Bacon attempted to remedy this evil, but it was not entirely effected for the two ſucceeding reigns. England, however, at length ſurmounted this obſtacle to its improvement, and has thus ariſen to its preſent high pitch of eminence in the world. But Ireland lags more than a century behind it. The ſouthern parts of it, where the land is in many places ſo rich that they are forced to throw, if convenient, the dung into the Shannon, are left in a manner wild and uncultivated. While the North, though in general a cold, coarſe, barren ſoil, is amazingly cultivated and improved by the induſtry of the inhabitants. And the population is accordingly. Political writers tell us, that the people are the riches of a country, but it is the wiſdom of a great part of this kingdom to take all poſſible means of leſſening the number of people. This is done by encouraging grazing, and diſcouraging tillage. Yet we are told by very good judges, that Munſter and Connaught, if well cultivated and improved, would maintain the ſame number of cattle as now, and five times as many inhabitants. But God

knows

knows when that will come to paſs. Another evil, that attends the too great prevalence of paſturage in a country, is, that it helps to promote idleneſs, which is the bane of every nation, This, as I ſhowed before, is the original ſource of all the diſturbances in the South of Ireland. For when people have nothing to do, they are ready to plot miſchief, and to follow every leader that ſtarts up among them, ſounding the alarm. Hiſtory, experience, and common ſenſe prove the truth of this.

Formerly, as I ſaid before, the graziers were forced to pay a ſort of tithe to the clergy, which was called agiſtment. It was indeed but reaſonable that this ſhould be the caſe, at leaſt in Munſter and Connaught, where they held in their hands (as they do now) by much the greater part of the land. Beſides, as they were allowed to be a ſpecies of men injurious to the nation, it would have been in the higheſt degree unjuſt and abſurd that they ſhould be excluded from contributing a ſmall ſhare to the ſupport of the regular clergy, who received a larger portion from the farmers, a uſeful body of men. Yet the Houſe of Commons of Ireland, about forty years ago, by means of a faction of graziers, paſſed a reſolution declaring any one an enemy to his country who ſhould aſſiſt the clergy to recover tithe-agiſtment. This iniquitous vote, *at one ſlap*, as the ſaying is, cut off from the clergy a large ſhare of their property. How theſe men reconciled it to their conſcience, it is not my buſineſs to inquire; poſſibly, they muſt anſwer for it, among the reſt of their doings, at that awful tribunal, where the ſecrets of all hearts will be diſcloſed. The clergy, before this vote, conſtantly carried all their ſuits for tithe-agiſtment in the Court of Exchequer, which proves that agiſtment was founded in common law. But after this vote, they never again durſt commence a ſuit of this kind. Hence it appears, that agiſtment was the property of the clergy, and that the Houſe of Commons, without even the ſhadow of reaſon, cruelly prevented them from recovering their proper-

ty;

ty; an injuſtice as great as if they paſſed a vote declaring any lawyer an enemy to his country who ſhould aſſiſt a private perſon to recover a certain portion of his juſt debts. I may ſay, that their vote was even more unjuſt than one of this ſort would have been; becauſe it would only have injured a ſingle perſon for a ſtated time, but theirs, reſpecting the clergy, was of ſuch a nature, as eſſentially to injure a large and uſeful body of men *in perpetuo*. Still I am ſurprized this wicked reſolution has been ſo ſtrictly attended to; as in fact it is no law without the conſent of the other branches of the legiſlature. And who knows but that the Commons may ſoon take the humour of paſſing a vote, declaring any lawyer an enemy to his country, who helps to recover tithes of any ſort? Thus, the inferior clergy and their property would then be at an end; which many (I muſt ſay in juſtice to this pious nation) would think to be a happy event.

Having thus proved this reſolution to be unjuſt, I ſhall now prove it to be impolitic. Graziers, as I have ſhewn, and as every man of common ſenſe muſt allow, are a ſet of men very injurious to this kingdom. Therefore, a wiſe nation, inſtead of giving them every encouragement, would ſtrive in ſome degree to diſcourage them. Before this plundering vote of the Commons, the graziers paid a very ſmall portion to the clergy, in compariſon of the farmers. Still, however, they paid ſomething. But the Commons, by their vote againſt agiſtment, freed the graziers from the neceſſity of even paying this. Thus, they did their endeavours to encourage the graziers, by taking every encumbrance off them, as if they were the introducers of ſome new art or manufacture, which in time might enrich the kingdom. I ſhall make no remarks on a proceeding, the groſs abſurdity of which, as the ſaying is, *a man with half an eye could ſee*. Beſides, it is in the higheſt degree, unjuſt, that theſe caterpillars, I have been talking of, ſhould enjoy the benefits of the church eſtabliſhment, and contribute nothing to its ſupport.

Le

Let us now enquire into the effects of this reſolution. Firſt, beſides its tendency to increaſe the number of graziers, the noxious inſects of our iſle, it helped alſo to raiſe the rents on the poor farmers, which, in all conſcience, were too high before. The grazier by means of this vote, had his land tithe-free, therefore, he could afford to give more for it, than the farmer could for his, which was ſubject to tithe. Accordingly, when a farmer's leaſe would expire, a neighbouring grazier would go to the mercileſs agent of the abſentee, to the land-jobber, or the reſiding landlord himſelf, all equally fond of money, and offer him an exorbitant price for it, which, for the foregoing reaſons, he could afford to give. Then, the old tenant would be told, in the uſual cant, he muſt bid as much as the grazier does, or turn out. Thus the lands in the ſouth have been raiſed to their preſent pitch. Thus, the induſtrious farmers have been oppreſſed, and the graziers enriched. A fine piece of policy. This vote againſt agiſtment, reſembles very much the odious law in France, which excludes all thoſe who have obtained the diſtinction of *nobleſſe*, from the moſt of the taxes.

Secondly, this reſolution made the clergy charge a little higher for the remaining tithe, than they otherwiſe would. The clergy in the ſouth, thus cut off from a large ſhare of their property, were obliged, in common prudence, to be more attentive to that which remained. They were forced to charge a little higher for the tithe of the corn and potatoes of the farmers and cottagers; otherwiſe, many of them might in a manner have gone a begging, both themſelves and their families. If a perſon be robbed of a part of his property by the roguery of lawyers, or villany of highwaymen, or houſe-breakers, he muſt, in that caſe, take more care of what little he is left; if not, he and his family may ſuffer by his negligence. Thus the clergy, plundered of their tithe-agiſtment, were forced to require a little more for the remaining tithe allowed them by the great lenity of the commons. Yet the

farmers could not with juſtice complain, becauſe, if they thought the clergyman's demands too high, (which ſcarce ever was the caſe) they might let him take his due in kind, and thus the diſpute would be ſettled. For, from what I have ſaid, it appears, that tithe is as much the property of the clergyman, as the land is that of the landlord. They both hold their reſpective properties by the power of the ſame conſtitution, of which tithe is an eſſential part. It follows alſo, that neither landlord, farmer nor grazier, even when liable to agiſtment, paid at any time a penny of their own money to the clergy. Becauſe the landlord at firſt received his eſtate ſubject to tithe, the farmer his portion, and the grazier his portion, liable alſo to it. If the landlord got his land by purchaſe, he obtained it ſo much cheaper, as being ſubject to tithe; the other two received their ſhares alſo ſo much cheaper on the ſame account. If the tenants take their land too dear from the landlord, it is not the clergyman's fault, whoſe portion was ſettled long before. Let them conſider it ſeriouſly before they cloſe the bargain. All that can be ſaid in the matter is, that the landlords, farmers and graziers were allowed often to keep the clergyman's money for a while in their hands, but it cannot be ſuppoſed they ever paid them a farthing of their own; no more than the clerks in the treaſury, when they pay the officers of the crown their reſpective ſalaries, can be ſuppoſed to pay theſe ſalaries out of their own pockets. The only difference in the caſe is this, that the poor clergy were never paid their dues ſo punctually and honeſtly, as the ſervants of the crown are their ſalaries. This is plain ſimple argumentation, free from all ſophiſtry and falſe colouring, which ſerve only to deceive.

I have thus ſhewn the injuſtice, impolicy, and abſurdity of the vote of agiſtment. It helped to encourage the graziers, the bane of the nation, and to oppreſs the induſtrious farmers, and poor cottagers. By encouraging paſturage, it tended alſo to promote idleneſs, which was too great before; and this, with the oppreſſions

oppreſſions occaſioned by the loſs of agiſtment, cauſed the people to break out into murmurs and diſcontents. It therefore contributed its ſhare to produce the preſent diſturbances, to which the ſouthern inhabitants of this iſland are too much inclined. For the people there, as I ſhewed before, are very wild and diſorderly, owing to their idle life, the cheapneſs of whiſkey and other fiery ſpirits, the abſence of men of power, the popiſh religion, and the conſtant uſe of the Iriſh language. They are therefore ready to take the alarm on every occaſion, and to riſe up in rebellion againſt the laws. The White-Boys firſt began their depredations, it is ſaid, becauſe ſome commons were incloſed. They wore white ſhirts over the reſt of their clothes, that they might better diſtinguiſh one another at night, or probably as an emblem of their purity and innocence. Tithes then were often the ſubject of their complaint, and tithe-proctors the object of their vengeance. The various ſufferings of the clergy and their agents, for a ſeries of years, from theſe ſavage inſurgents, I ſhall not undertake to deſcribe, as it would require one whoſe deſcriptive talents are far ſuperior to mine, and who has reſided long in the country. They have of late, it ſeems, thrown off the white ſhirts, and called themſelves Right-Boys, when they renewed their former wicked conduct with more fury and violence than ever. A few of their villanies I have mentioned already, whence the public may eaſily gueſs at the reſt of them. All that the clergy can be ſaid to have done for deſerving this treatment, is, the requiring of the ſuſtenance allowed them by the laws of God and their country. It cannot be proved that any of them were guilty of injuſtice, or even oppreſſion; for it is impoſſible they could, as the people had always the remedy in their own hands. After the reſolution againſt agiſtment, the peculiar circumſtances of their condition, cauſed them to be more attentive to the tithes that remained to them. The livings in Munſter are ſo unprofitable to the clergy, that there is often a neceſſity of forming

unions of large diſtricts, which afford, after all, but a poor ſcanty income. They live moſtly in miſerable deſolate places, without any comfortable dwellings, or pleaſing accommodations; far from market towns, or any tolerable ſociety. It is the policy of landlords and agents to oppreſs them, as by this they uſually ſcrape up ſomething more to themſelves. They will ſcarce ever aſſiſt them to ſet their tithes, but rather excite the people againſt them, as I have ſhewn above. The people excited by theſe gentry, and oppreſſed alſo by the ſame, naturally fond of wickedneſs, riot and diſturbance, angry at the clergy, and hating the proteſtant religion, broke out into the furious violences I have mentioned. The firſt fell on the proctors and tithe-viewers, and then on the clergy themſelves.

Proctors and tithe-viewers are univerſally cried out againſt, and I think with great injuſtice. It is a hard caſe, that a private gentleman ſhould be allowed an agent to manage his eſtate; and a clergyman refuſed one to help him to manage his tithe; a buſineſs far more difficult and perplexed. This can be aſcribed to nothing but the wickedneſs of the age, which has an utter averſion to true religion. The eſtated gentleman has not ſurely ſo much buſineſs on his hands as the clergyman, whoſe time ſhould be employed in ſtudying divinity, writing ſermons, and in the public and private duties of his ſtation. If the clergyman be allowed no one to help him to manage his tithe, he muſt go from field to field over the whole pariſh, to view it himſelf; and muſt be engaged too, in the low office of prigging and wrangling with every countryman, about a ſhilling or eighteen-pence; which muſt make him appear in a very deſpicable point of view. And if he do not ſubmit to this poor mean dealing, his ſmall income may be frittered away, piece by piece, to little or nothing. Now I aſk any friend of the eſtabliſhed Church, (for the enemies of it, I am ſure, will pay no attention to my arguments, or indeed to common ſenſe) how much the proteſtant religion would

would be benefited, if the perſons of the clergy, which ſhould be reſpectable, were rendered thus contemptible by this mean ſort of chaffering? Beſides, the oaths of two perſons are required by the eccleſiaſtical courts, to prove the value of tithes unjuſtly carried off: And the clergyman's own oath will not be taken. Hence then, there is an abſolute neceſſity for proctors or tithe-viewers. But the people are angry at theſe, becauſe they cannot cheat them of as much as they do the clergy. As for the practice of *canting* tithe-corn, ſo much complained of, it is of real uſe to poor cottagers, the low labouring claſs of people in ſmall towns, and the like; as it ſupplies them with neceſſary ſubſiſtence for themſelves, and fodder for their cattle, upon long credit, at a cheaper rate than corn is uſually bought for ready money, and without intereſt, in place of the oppreſſive uſury extorted by farmers. The Right-Boys, among the reſt of their doings, by ſuppreſſing this very uſeful practice, have reduced many poor families to the loweſt miſery. But they care little about this. Indeed the complaints brought againſt the clergy, proceed moſtly from private intereſt, a diſlike to the order, and to the proteſtant religion in general, which is placed, I hope, on a foundation too ſolid to be ſhaken, *nor ſhall the gates of hell prevail againſt it.* If the clergy's conduct reſpecting their tithes, were examined impartially over the whole kingdom, it would be found, they ſhewed more lenity and forbearance than any other body of men. If landlords would ſhew as much, they would be called ſo many ſaints, while the clergy, with all this, are ſet out as ſo many devils.

The Biſhop of Cloyne tells us in his very ſenſible pamphlet, that the noble Lord, who laſt ſummer made the tour of Munſter with his men, in his returns to government, bears witneſs to the clemency and moderation of the clergy. If ſo, he is indeed a very ſtrong evidence in their favour, becauſe he went down on his expedition, prejudiced againſt them. He joined the reſt in the H—— of C——s, in the clamour againſt

againſt the clergy, and now it appears he was not ſufficiently acquainted with the reality of the charges he brought againſt them. *Injuſtice*, *oppreſſion*, *exactions*, *extortions*, and ſuch like odious terms, applied to the clergy, come readily into the mouths of thoſe who are enemies to the eſtabliſhed Church, and to chriſtianity in general. But gentlemen ſhould pay ſome little attention to truth, and take time to liſten to what *ſhe* ſays, before they caſt ſuch opprobrious cenſure on ſo learned and reſpectable a body of men. The clergyman, whoſe tithe-books were introduced into a public court-houſe, is an inſtance of the lenity of his order. The Noble Lord, as I hear, acted with ſuch laudable clemency towards the ſouthern inſurgents, that he ſtrove to bring them to obedience, rather by his oratory than his arms. He therefore harangued Captain Right and his men, on the impropriety of their proceedings, promiſing them a redreſs of all their grievances. But the Captain, who is a mere barbarian, would not be perſuaded by him, he was quite inſenſible to the charms of his eloquence, he is like the *deaf adder*, mentioned by the pſalmiſt, *which would not liſten to the voice of the charmer, charm he ever ſo wiſely*. Thus, while his Lordſhip was haranguing to a part of the White-Boys in one place, their accomplices were robbing the poor clergy in another. So that it ſeems, indeed, as if Government were at the vaſt expence of removing the army from one part of the kingdom to the other, merely to afford the General an opportunity of making a fine ſpeech; which, by the by, was quite thrown away on the ſenſeleſs dogs it was addreſſed to. The General adviſed the clergy to turn away their proctors, and appointed to them particular rates of tithe which ſeemed agreeable to the Right-Boys; but all this had not the happy effect he intended. Many inſurgents, I dare ſay, were taken and put in jail, but after all their crimes and felonies, they were ſoon let looſe on the country again, for no one dare proſecute them at the aſſizes, which ſhews the whole power to be in their own hands. And af-

ter

ter the aſſizes they went on with the ſame wicked work as before. They go about now day and night prowling through the country, *like ſo many roaring lions, ſeeking whom they may devour.* A few nights ago they broke into a farm-houſe, and after ſome ſearching found at laſt in a cheſt a quart full of guineas, the hard earnings of many a year of toil and induſtry, and ſoon ſnapt them all up. Then they tied the farmer faſt with cords, and took his poor old mother, and clapt her bare backſide on a burning hot griddle, becauſe ſhe refuſed to tell them where the money was. Now I aſk where is the uſe of the General and his men? What advantage has the public derived from the removal of the army, which coſt ſo much to the nation?

The King of France, with forty thouſand men,
Went up the hill, and then came down again.

It ſhould be the ſtudy of a wiſe government to deviſe a method of quieting this diſorderly ſpirit in the South of Ireland. The firſt and chief mode of effecting this would be, in my opinion, to find out ſome employment for the people. As long as idleneſs prevails, to which the natural Iriſh are too much inclined, no good can be expected. If manufactures, or agriculture, or both, were more univerſally introduced, very ſalutary effects would enſue. A great part of the wool produced in Munſter is exported to France. The ſpinning of white-woollen yarn, which takes place in Clonmel, Carrick, and Bandon, is carried on by quakers, a quiet induſtrious ſort of people. But almoſt the whole of the country is void of manufactures. The women have ſcarce any thing to do, but go a begging, or burn their ſhins at the fire, or roaſt potatoes in the aſhes. It is evident now to every one, what a happy change would be effected by the introduction of manufactures. But when that will take place no mortal can tell.

Agriculture ſhould be countenanced, and grazing diſcouraged. A piece of policy to which this kingdom, I think, has not paid ſufficient attention. It is a ſhame for our legiſlature to allow ſo many live cattle to go out of the country. In the year 1785, 22,226 were exported. Thus we loſt the advantage of tanning the hides of theſe, of manufacturing the leather, the tallow, the hair and the horns. How many of thoſe running idle might have been employed, if theſe had been kept at home. But the conduct of the people of Ireland ſeems to be contrary to every maxim of prudence. Fleſh-meat, by this curſed exportation, is now *out of all buying*, the very poor can ſcarce taſte it once in the year, and middling people are pinched hard to get it now and then. All this is for the advantage of the graziers.

The vote againſt agiſtment ſhould be repealed. *(b)* Then the graziers would be forced to contribute a ſhare to the ſupport of the eſtabliſhed clergy; and the poor, in grazing countries, would no longer have any reaſon to com plain of tithes, becauſe the clergy would require from them very little in lieu of the tithe, as they do now in almoſt every part of the kingdom where agriculture abounds. For we hear no complaints from thoſe quarters about tithes; the people there, at leaſt thoſe of them that have any ſenſe, are quiet, and contented with this mode of payment of the eſtabliſhed clergy, becauſe, they give ſo little in proportion to the value of the tithe, and ſo often get off without paying for it.

The repealing of the vote of agiſtment might tend alſo to promote the proteſtant intereſt in Ireland. A circum-

(b) The gentlemen and graziers in the pariſh of Ballangary in the county of Tipperary, with a noble diſintereſtedneſs unuſual in this age, have taxed their graſslands ſo much an acre for the ſupport of the eſtabliſhed clergyman. The tithe therefore lies very light on the poor farmers and cottagers.

ſtance

ſtance, which, at this alarming ſeaſon, deſerves the ſerious attention of every well-wiſher to our happy conſtitution.

The Chriſtian Religion, which was firſt delivered to the world in beautiful ſimplicity and purity from the ſkilful hand of its Almighty Framer, was afterwards, as we well know, debaſed and deformed by the impure doctrines, and fictitious trappings of men. Superſtition thus took root in the chriſtian church, and ſpread widely over it for about twelve hundred years. And indeed it ſtill might have continued to reign with abſolute ſway over the world, had not the bold reformers of the ſixteenth century ventured to oppoſe it, and to tear off the veil, which, for many ages, concealed the errors of popery from the public eye. At this time our divine religion, which was ſo long diſfigured by the ludicrous dreſs, it was forced to put on, began once more to aſſume the elegant ſimplicity of its original form. Pure chriſtianity, purged from error, began then once more to be preached to the world. The proteſtant Church of England at that time took its riſe. It was tinctured with no venemous rancour againſt popery, it was hurried on by no ſpiteful oppoſition, but diſplayed, in all its proceedings, ſingular temper and moderation, anxious only to get rid of error. The Hiſtorian Mr. Hume, whoſe principles prove him to have been biaſſed in favour of no particular ſpecies of chriſtianity, pays it this elegant compliment. " Of all the European churches, which " ſhook off the yoke of papal authority, no one pro- " ceeded with ſo much reaſon and moderation as the " church of England.—Rage and animoſity againſt " the catholic religion was as little indulged as could " be ſuppoſed in ſuch as revolution. The fabric of " the ſecular hierarchy was maintained entire: The " ancient liturgy was preſerved, ſo far as was thought " conſiſtent with the new principles: Many ceremo- " nies, become venerable from age and preceding uſe, " were retained: The ſplendor of the Romiſh wor- " ſhip, though removed, had at leaſt given place to

" order and decency: The diſtinctive habits of the " clergy, according to their different ranks, were " continued: No innovation was admitted merely " from ſpite and oppoſition to former uſage: And " the new religion, by mitigating the genius of the " ancient ſuperſtition, and rendering it more compa- " tible with the peace and intereſts of ſociety, had pre- " ſerved itſelf in that happy medium, which wiſe " men have always ſought, and which the people " have ſo ſeldom been able to maintain."

Such is the tribute of applauſe paid by a famous unbeliever to the Church of England. Happy would it have been for the world, if the principles of the Romiſh Church were ſo mild, tolerating, and amiable. If ſo, the horrid murders and cruelties committed by the mercileſs Philip II. of Spain, by the peeviſh bigot Mary of England, by the perfidious Charles IX. of France, and the ſavage papiſts of Ireland, in the year 1641, would not now blacken ſtill more the gloomy page of hiſtory. Roman catholics are always dangerous ſubjects in every proteſtant government. They acknowledge the authority of a ſuperior, who has power, they think, to abſolve them from the moſt ſacred and ſolemn oaths. It is a prevailing principle among them (which their biſhops, at their ordination, are ſworn to put in practice) to ſtrive to pull down every other religion in a country, and to eſtabliſh their own on its ruins. What ſecurity then can we proteſtants have for the loyalty and peaceable conduct of thoſe, who have ſuch odious principles as theſe, and acknowledge too the ſupreme authority of the Pope? The only one I ſay is unanimity among ourſelves, and a determination not to truſt them with too much power. The proteſtant diſſenters, for whom, as a body, I have a high reſpect, ſhould ſeriouſly conſider this matter. If the papiſts had the chief ſway in this kingdom, do they think they would meet with any indulgence from them? If they do, they are deceived; for they like them worſe than they do us. And I am afraid they

are

are not too fond of either of us; yet I know ſome Roman Catholics who would do honour to any religion.

It is therefore the duty of a humane proteſtant government to give the Roman Catholic ſubjects every indulgence conſiſtent with their own ſafety. They ſhould, however, at the ſame time take every politic peaceable method of ſtriving to reclaim them from their errors. Becauſe, their principles, if put in practice, would endanger the welfare of the ſtate. Conſequently, they ſhould give the eſtabliſhed clergyman every poſſible aſſiſtance in their endeavours to reform them. They ſhould regulate matters ſo, that each pariſh of a tolerable ſize, would be ſufficient to ſupport a clergyman, and have alſo a decent church. But what is the caſe in Ireland, where the papiſts, I may ſay, infinitely exceed the proteſtants in number? In the province of Leinſter there are pariſhes of conſequence that have no church for public worſhip. In the market-town of Mountrath, in the Queen's County, there is no pariſh church, ſo that the proteſtant pariſhioners, to the amount of near two hundred, are forced to meet for divine ſervice of a Sunday in the common market-houſe. But the ſituation of Munſter and Connaught in this particular is ſtill more unfavourable. You may often find there unions of pariſhes from five to nine, which take up an extent of twenty miles. For all this tract of country there is only one clergyman and one church. So that by this, many, poſſibly well inclined to the eſtabliſhed religion, ſeldom or never attend public worſhip. But there are popiſh chapels in every corner ready to entice them. Theſe united pariſhes, if the country be laid out in paſture, as is uſually the caſe, ſcarce afford a decent ſubſiſtence to the clergyman. But if agriculture happen in a few places to abound, the rectors of theſe unions have too much. Conſequently, as they generally have no houſes or glebes, (the great defect in thoſe parts) and as they can afford to live abroad, they quit the country, and leave the duty of theſe pariſhes to be done by ſome wretched ſtarving

curates, whoſe poverty makes them contemptible. Now, if the vote againſt agiſtment were repealed, many a one of theſe pariſhes thus united, might, of itſelf, be ſufficient to afford a little ſcanty ſubſiſtence to a clergyman who has no high expectations. Thus, (if a church could be anywiſe procured) the pariſh would be ſupplied with an eſtabliſhed proteſtant inſtructor, the advantage of which muſt be evident to every friend of our happy conſtitution.

The Iriſh language ſhould, if poſſible, be aboliſhed; for as long as it is ſpoken univerſally among the people, ſo long unavoidably they muſt be barbarians. Government, therefore, ſhould ſtrive to have ſome law paſſed, requiring them at leaſt to ſpeak Engliſh at their fairs, markets, and ſuch places of public reſort. This ſeems quite neceſſary, before they can poſſibly be civilized. The beſt way of judging of a language, is by the effects it produces on thoſe who ſpeak it; but we find that thoſe who ſpeak only the Iriſh language, are nearly as wild as the Indians of America. I muſt therefore ſay now, with all due reſpect, that ſome gentlemen, who have of late ſpent their time in proving the excellence and antiquity of the Iriſh language, might have employed their talents much better on ſome other ſubjects, the diſcuſſion of which, would poſſibly turn out more to the public advantage.

Government ſhould take ſome more effectual method of putting a ſtop to ſmuggling, and aboliſhing private ſtills, the ſhame and ſcandal of our police. This curſed practice helps to diſorder the heads of the people, injures the fair trader, and gives our parliament a plea for laying new taxes on the neceſſaries of life; to which I muſt ſay, they are well enough inclined of themſelves. The Biſhop of Cloyne has proved it to a certainty, in a pamphlet he wrote on ſmuggling about three years ago.

Some material alteration ſhould be made in the wretched police, which at preſent ſubſiſts in the ſouth of Ireland. For if the country continue to be ruled thus

thus by a lawleſs banditti, plundering, and levying heaps of gunpowder and money, and murdering innocent people, why then Government is at an end; we are all in a ſtate of nature, which is too often found to be a ſtate of warfare. The ſhameleſs magiſtrates, who favoured the White-Boys, and neglected to do their duty, ſhould be puniſhed and ſtripped of their authority, which ſhould be placed in the hands of others more worthy of it; if ſuch can be found. But Government ſhould not make theſe diſturbances in the ſouth, a plea for putting the peaceable part of the kingdom under martial law, by an odious police-bill, which is contrary to the privilege of a free nation.

A tax ſhould be laid on abſentees, the bane of this unhappy country, which is loaded with ſo many clogs to retard its progreſs to improvement. This might make ſome of them paſs at leaſt a part of their time in the kingdom, and poſſibly on their own eſtates, where their reſidence among their tenants might help to employ them, to civilize them, and to keep them in order. They might then ſet their lands to their lower tenants themſelves, and not leave them to be racked by the vile land-jobbers. However, let them take up their abode in whatever part of the kingdom they might think fit, ſtill ſome of the m oney, which is now carried abroad, would then remain among us. Thoſe of them who would not come here to reſide, would then pay a tax for their abſence, the produce of which might be aſſigned to the uſeful purpoſe of encouraging agriculture and manufactures, of building churches, of purchaſing glebes, ſo much wanted at preſent, and of enforcing the laws in the ſouth of Ireland.

The few hints I have thrown out now, are, I think, founded on reaſon; but I do not flatter myſelf with the hope, that any one of them will at all be attended to by the legiſlature of this country; for why ſhould they liſten to a perſon ſo obſcure as I am? Indeed the conduct of ********** now a days, often proceeds from ſuch motives as I would be aſhamed, or afraid

afraid to mention. Yet I muſt be ſo candid as to own, that the Parliament of Ireland, on ſome few late occaſions, ſhewed themſelves to be the guardians of the liberty of the people. What I have ſaid now, is dictated by an unfeigned love for this my native country, the welfare of which I have ſo near my heart. If one or two of the moſt neceſſary regulations I have mentioned would take place, we might probably be plagued no more with complaints about tithes, or *the exactions of the clergy*. But it is the fate or humour of the people of Ireland, to liſten to every wild projector, who, with his head full of freaks, ſtarts up among them, eager to entice them by the novelty of his ſchemes.

Of this ſpecies, I muſt ſay, are many of thoſe gentry who talk now ſo fluently about a commutation of tithes. The only rational objection brought againſt tithe is, that it ſeems to be a ſort of tax upon induſtry; though the Biſhop of Cloyne has proved it to be no tax at all. Indeed the Biſhop's arguments, through the whole of his pamphlet, are ſo founded on common ſenſe, that it is impoſſible, by fair reaſoning, to overcome them. If a merchant, by his induſtry, increaſe his trade, he pays more taxes; this you may as well ſay is very unjuſt, becauſe it is a tax upon induſtry.

From what I have ſhewn already, it muſt appear to every candid perſon, I ſhould think, that tithes by no means lie as a heavy encumbrance on the ſhoulders of the farmer. He took his land ſubject to theſe, and therefore got it ſo much cheaper; he has ſo many advantages over the clergyman, that he ſeldom gives him more than a third part of the real value of his tithe: The clergyman, for peace and quietneſs ſake, and often through clemency, yields up to him a large ſhare of his juſt rights. Thus the burden of tithe (if it can be called ſuch) by the pieces broke off it, becomes light. Suppoſe now a ſcholar, who has been ſtudying in a college, for eight or ten years, Greek and Latin, mathematics, philoſophy and aſtronomy, gets a living in the country; then he is all at once engaged in a new

buſineſs,

buſineſs, he had no idea of before. Though he be quite a maſter of Homer or Demoſthenes, he knows nothing of tithes. Theſe Greek books never told him how he ſhould manage tithe. Thus he, a mere novice at the trade, is forced to engage with his people, moſtly old practitioners, accuſtomed probably every year to the ſame ſort of chaffering. He encounters theſe then, I muſt ſay, on very unequal terms; as well might a pigmy hope to beat a giant, as he to get the better of them. In fact, he knows more of the motions of the moon, than of the various ſhiftings and turnings of the lower ſort of people; and is fleeced by them accordingly. If he employ a proctor, the people probably riſe up againſt him. The proctor, too, will certainly impoſe on his ignorance, or poſſibly make it up with the country people, that they may both ſnap a part from him.

We all know that the manner in which the clergy get their dues, in bits and ſcraps from one and another, is not the moſt pleaſing to them imaginable. Yet if they prefer this mode to any other, why ſhould it be changed? It helps to put them in mind of their duty to their reſpective flocks, whom they ſee each contributing to their ſupport. It tends alſo to encourage reſidence, becauſe an income by tithes is ſo unſtable, and requires ſuch care, as to be often very much leſſened by the abſence of the clergyman. It is of ſuch a nature too, as to make it the intereſt of the clergyman to keep on good terms with his people; becauſe, if they diſlike him, they may injure him effectually. Tithe is paid more or leſs, generally in proportion to the real value of the land, ſince the beſt way, on the whole, of judging of the real value of land, is by its produce. The clergyman ſhares with the farmer in his adverſity and his proſperity; if he has a good crop, he gets more, if he has a bad one, he gets leſs: So that he may be ſaid to *rejoice with thoſe that rejoice, and weep with thoſe that weep.* Tithes, however difficult to be collected, generally increaſe in price according as money decreaſes in value, and therefore are calculated

to

to afford a durable ſubſiſtence to the clergy. They are venerable for their antiquity, ſince they exiſted from the beginning of the world. They were enjoined by the commands of God himſelf, and ſhould not be violated by the rude hands of every profane innovator. They are an eſſential part of our unequalled conſtitution, and therefore ſhould be eſteemed ſacred. They are required by common and ſtatute laws of eight hundred years ſtanding, which makes them fixed property; and therefore they cannot be taken away, but by an open violation of every principle of equity and juſtice.

Yet the ſwarm of ſcriblers who are plaguing us at preſent, are ſtill buzzing it into our ears, that a commutation of tithe is neceſſary, and muſt ſurely take place. But not one of theſe ever inſinuates that it would be requiſite firſt to conſult the clergy collectively, to know if they would accept of what theſe projectors ſo kindly offer them, in lieu of their preſent property. No, they have not the good manners. Suppoſe now, my neighbour has a longing deſire for my field, which he thinks more convenient to him than his own; if he be an honeſt man, he comes to me, and tells me he will give me ſo much for it. If I like his propoſal, I let him take it; if not, I keep it to myſelf. But if he be a rogue, he will ſtrive to wriggle himſelf in with my landlord, and get it taken from me; or cheat me out of it by the trickiſh quirks of lawyers, and then poſſibly, juſt to make a ſhow, throw me ſome traſh in return. Homer tells us, that when Diomede and Glaucus met in battle, Diomede, who was the ſtronger man, under pretence of great friendſhip for Glaucus, becauſe it ſeems their old grandfathers were acquainted, made him exchange armour with him, ſaying, "Glaucus, I'll take your golden, and you'll take my "braſs armour." A modeſt propoſal: And I muſt ſay, he has a face of braſs, who would openly ſtand up to take the clergy's good tithe from them, without their conſent, and give them, by his pretty commutation, ſome trumpery in return. He is like one of the

the beggars, (if his honour will forgive me the compariſon,) we uſually meet in the ſtreets of Dublin, who holds out to us a *rap* in his hand, and plagues us to give him a good halfpenny for it. Let him keep his raps to himſelf, and not force them on the clergy, in exchange for their good halfpence. And I would tell him to his face, he is a rap for attempting it.

The abettors of commutation are either weak, well-meaning, ſhort-ſighted people, friends to the eſtabliſhed church, or bitter enemies to it, and poſſibly to chriſtianity in general, influenced ſolely by malice and private intereſt. Theſe latter gentry are far more numerous. The arguments againſt commutation have been ſtated ſo fully by Theophilus and the Lord Biſhop of Cloyne, that it would be needleſs for me to enter cloſely into them now. To mention the heads of them may ſuffice. According to the idea of commutation, the real value of each living ſhould be found out; but this is nearly impoſſible, from the ignorance, prejudice, or ſelf-intereſted motives of the perſons to be employed, from a variety of circumſtances, of which I will mention one. The people of a pariſh, as is uſual over the whole kingdom, by their wicked combinations, may have defrauded the clergyman of at leaſt eight parts out of ten of his juſt income for many years, previous to the time this ſuppoſed valuation is to be made. Is then the real value of the living to be judged of by the paltry ſum theſe plunderers have pad for many years before? This even an enemy to the church would be aſhamed to own. If even the value of each pariſh could be aſcertained, an eſtabliſhed rate on each for the ſupport of the clergyman would be improper, becauſe pariſhes, from a variety of incidents, vary conſiderably in ſome ſpace of time. A pariſh rich now in a ſeries of years may become poor, and one poor now in a ſeries of years may become rich. The preſent deſpicable ſtate of ſome boroughs in Ireland is a proof of this. A tax of any particular ſum would be unequal to the purpoſe,

becauſe the value of money is daily decreaſing. To point out the various gradations by which the value of money decreaſed in Rome, from Romulus to Auguſtus,* and in England, from the conqueſt to the preſent time, would be tedious to myſelf, and poſſibly tireſome to my readers. Swift has handled that ſubject with an ability peculiar to himſelf. It may be ſufficient to remark, that one guinea would buy as much of the neceſſaries of life forty years ago, as two would do at preſent. And gold is ſtill decreaſing in value. Suppoſe a living, worth now a hundred a-year, was appointed to afford the clergyman conſtantly the ſame fixed ſum by a tax or rate. In fifty years it would be worth but fifty, (if we ſuppoſe money to continue decreaſing in value as before) and in a hundred, it would be ſcarce worth any thing at all. So that by this mode of payment, the church would in a ſhort time be deſtroyed. Therefore a tax or rate would be improper. It is on this account, we poor curates complain now, that our preſent little pittance is ſcarce ſufficient to keep our ſouls and bodies together. As for fine eating and drinking, we cannot pretend to it; and thoſe of us that have families to ſupport, God knows, have but a pinched life of it. A general tax would alſo make thoſe who pay miniſter's-money in large towns pay twice to the clergy, which I humbly think would be too hard on them. As for the mode propoſed by ſome ſchemer, of having the clergy's income ſettled at ſtated times by a parcel of country juſtices at a quarter-ſeſſion, drinking, and talking politics, and ſpeaking nonſenſe, and curſing and ſwearing, and ſinging merry ſongs, and giving bawdy toaſts; it does

* *Dion Caſſius mentions, that on Auguſtus's bringing to Rome vaſt quantities of wealth from the conqueſt of Egypt, money fell all at once one half in value, and conſequently the price of the neceſſaries of life was doubled. A ſudden change of this ſort may poſſibly happen again.*

not

not, I humbly confeſs, appear to me ſo very perfect as he imagines.

To purchaſe a particular portion of land, ſuitable to the amount of the preſent livings of the kingdom, would not be ſufficient, becauſe it would be confining the nation to the ſame number of inferior clergy as at preſent, which affords only one to ſeventeen ſquare miles; and I hope God Almighty, notwithſtanding all our offences, will ſtill have more mercy on us, than to allow us to be always over-run thus with popery. It would confine the nation to the ſame number of inferior clergy; as it would not afford ſubſiſtence to any more than are now; the incomes of whom, if divided equally among them all, would not amount to more than £140 yearly for each. This ſcheme of purchaſing land ſuppoſes alſo that the kingdom will perpetually continue in its preſent unimproved ſtate, which I hope may not be the caſe. Our commerce and agriculture may ſtill greatly increaſe and improve, and indeed there is much room for it; at leaſt it is to be hoped ſo, and *without hope the heart would break.* Beſides, I know not where the nation would get money to buy ſo much land, nor if they had it, where they would get the land to buy; unleſs they would employ a file of muſketeers, to diſpoſſeſs people by force of their property; and then the remedy would be worſe than the diſeaſe. Commiſſioners ſhould be appointed for purchaſing it at large ſalaries. If theſe had ſufficient knowledge, which I doubt very much, are we ſure they would be honeſt and impartial on receiving ſo great a truſt? I am ſure they would not: But from lenity to my dear countrymen, I will forbear to mention the reaſon. Now, while theſe doughty commiſſioners would be going on with their work, how would the clergy be maintained? What hurry and trepidation, what anxious hearts and ſorrowful faces would be among them, deprived thus of their property, and doubtful if they would get any thing nearly equal in return? For all this they muſt depend on the mercy and conſcience of the commiſſioners. How ſmartly would the lay-impropriators that have tithes ſcratch

their heads, and bite their lips, who now, I dare ſay, bleſs the memory of that impious plunderer, Henry VIII. one of the moſt odious tyrants that ever diſgraced the annals of any nation? Yet that profane wicked king, ſo famed for ſpoiling the church, let the tithes remain as before. He ſnatched, it is true, the abbey-lands, belonging to the church, to himſelf, which he ſold for money, or beſtowed on his favourites. Theſe were excluded from tithes, when they were in the hands of the church, and unjuſtly continued ſo, after they were torn away from their right owners. The great Luther, and the reformers in Germany, except a few of the preſbyterian ſect, amidſt all the improvements they introduced, never touched tithes. Yet are we to take them away, when it will produce the terrible conſequences I have ſhewn, juſt to humour a popiſh banditti in the ſouth, ſtiling themſelves Right-Boys, ſworn enemies to our proteſtant church, who ſhould be ſhot at, like ſo many mad dogs running acroſs the country. If parliament would do what they deſire them reſpecting tithe, they would then aſk more, and continue thus aſking and rioting for ever. Indeed they are beginning now to ſpeak out, for they ſay they will not be content with the aboliſhing of tithes, but muſt have many more alterations. Thus Cromwell's ſaints, that were ſeemingly modeſt at the beginning, deſired the Houſe of Commons to grant them this and that, ſaying how diſtreſſed and afflicted they were. The Commons, terrified by theſe military apoſtles, were forced to do as they bid them. But all this did not avail; for theſe holy ſoldiers, well armed with guns and ſwords, ſoon came to London, and entered the Houſe of Commons, with Cromwell at their head, and turned out the members, whom Cromwell ſpoke thus to: "Go about your buſineſs all of you, I "have no more occaſion for you; you are an adulterer, "you are a ſabbath-breaker, you are a profane perſon; "take away that bauble, the mace, lock the door, and "give me the key."

Theſe

Theſe popiſh rioters that have riſen up againſt our church, are daily inſtigated by agitating friars, prieſts, and emiſſaries from France. They have ſworn at the foot of their altars to deſtroy our church, but I hope in God they will be perjured. If once they can get the church, an eſſential part of our conſtitution, laid low, then what remains, thus made weaker, will, they think, be more eaſily pulled down after. At firſt indeed, by the advice of ſome of their wily inſtigators, they nailed up a chapel or two, pretended to inſult a prieſt, and to refuſe paying their clergy their dues; but this was a mere ſcheme to conceal their dark deſigns, which were ſoon made too clear; and their clergy were quickly made amends for their ſeeming loſſes, by private collections. They are rouſed alſo to their deeds by the artful addreſſes of Mr. O'Leary, our Iriſh Junius, who has got, as I hear, a penſion of two or three hundred a-year from Government, as a reward for his ſplendid merit. I think it might be better beſtowed. He tells the Right-Boys, he is one of themſelves, that *he believes in the ſeven ſacraments*; I wiſh he could prove them. He alſo believes, he ſays, in the amazing effect of holy water, holy ſpittle, and holy oil, in the power of the pope or prieſts to forgive all ſins, and to deſtroy the obligation of all oaths; he is ſure too, he ſays, of tranſubſtantiation and of purgatory. I don't grudge him his faith; he has a wide ſwallow. I wiſh he would tell us, if they intend (as is uſual) to put a pair of thick-ſoled brogues in his coffin when he dies, to prevent him from burning his toes in purgatory, as he paſſes through it. He ſays to the White-Boys again; "My poor innocent friends, you "are oppreſſed more than any people in the world, the "fellows that are going to ſwear your lives away, are "the greateſt villains on earth, and deſerving of the "gallows; your diſcontents are owing to the dues of "the clergy; pay your tithes, be they ever ſo op-"preſſive, rather than put your necks in the halter; "wait with patience for the relief, the wiſdom and "humanity of parliament will in time and place ſug-

"geſt;

" geſt; the way of the croſs is the road to the crown." Fine way to pacify them! He talks thus of Captain Right and the Right-Boys, as one would of the apoſtles and martyrs of the goſpel. I wonder he is not aſhamed to make uſe of ſuch language in a chriſtian land; but ſhame ſeems to be baniſhed out of the world. He offers to go and preach in one of our proteſtant churches to his popiſh rabble; let him confine his preaching to his maſs-houſes; the papiſts have not yet got the ſupreme power. We can write and preach for ourſelves; though not as well as he, yet ſufficient to make ourſelves underſtood. For all this, I am ſure he deſerves to be *properly* rewarded by Government.

Thus it is evident, that the deſign of one and all of them is to deſtroy the eſtabliſhed church. Some ſhort-ſighted preſbyterians think it would be well for them, if this were the caſe. But they may be aſſured that the papiſts would uſurp the authority to themſelves, and whether they would uſe it as mildly as the preſent church of Ireland, I bid them at their leiſure calmly to conſider. Many diſcreet preſbyterians have been ſo candid as to own to me, that they were ſure, if their own church had the power, it would not be ſo indulgent as ours to tender conſciences.

Yet it is a faſhionable doctrine with ſome of theſe, and with moſt of our refiners, that it is no matter what a man's opinions in religion are, if he be orthodox in politics. This, among many others, is a plain inſtance of the infidelity of this wicked age. It is placing this world above the next. And indeed moſt people live now as if they did not believe in another world at all; which I am afraid is too much the caſe. This impious doctrine ſuppoſes that we ſhould be very careful to get right notions reſpecting the low concerns of this ſhort life, but ſhould be quite eaſy about diſcovering the real intent of the ſacred truths contained in the goſpel, which alone affords us a ſure hope of immortality. This doctrine has been circulated very extenſively, not I hope with a bad deſign, by a certain Prelate of this kingdom, who, a few years

years ago, made a ſplendid figure in newſpapers and at volunteer conventions. I have the higheſt opinion of the generoſity, liberality, and charity of that noble Prelate, whoſe conduct in the diſpoſal of his livings affords a pattern, that will not, I am afraid, be too cloſely copied by the reſt of his brethren. Since then he has ſo many virtues, it is to be hoped his Lordſhip, on mature deliberation, will ſhake off theſe dangerous ſentiments, that ſeem ſo hoſtile to chriſtianity.

It is often now a favourite topic of converſation, that this kingdom of ours muſt be in a very happy ſtate, becauſe we are bleſſed with ſo great a variety of religious opinions which are increaſing every day. But, as for myſelf, I do not feel ſo much delight on this account; though poſſibly it may be owing to the hardneſs of my heart. One thing I am ſure of, that Saint Paul and the other apoſtles would not have eſteemed it ſo great a bleſſing. But their opinions are very little attended to now a days. The Apoſtle deſires the firſt chriſtians *to be all of one mind, one with another*, and ſo on. But our modern refiners tell us we muſt not be of one mind, that we muſt follow all our own whims, and go different ways, like a gang of robbers, or pick-pockets, who take different routes to their general place of rendezvous, leſt they ſhould be diſcovered.

But however numerous the religious ſects are at preſent, they would become, I may ſay, infinite, if once our preſent eſtabliſhment were deſtroyed, according to the pious wiſhes of ſome enemies to our pure mode of worſhip. Theſe tell us that every ſect ſhould pay its own clergy, and then we would be happy. I doubt that. One thing I am ſure of, that then few clergy of the Church of England would any longer remain; as the people of that perſuaſion, from their ſmall numbers, and their natural turn of mind, would in moſt places, be either unable or unwilling to pay them. Then there would no longer be any fixed inſtructers in the country; but the people would be left to themſelves, to follow the mild dictates of their own imaginations, or run after every mad fanatic preacher that would

would ſtart up among them, bawling out his new doctrines, diſplaying his ſtrange piety, grunting and groaning, and turning up the white of his eyes, and ſniveling through his noſe, and talking of his inſpirations, nocturnal viſions, extacies and illuminations. Then every day we ſhould have a new preacher, and a new ſet of doctrines; the people would not know whom to believe in, or follow; naturally fond of novelty, they would run from one to the other, like the Athenians in Saint Paul's time, *ſeeking ſome new thing*. Then we ſhould have a merry kingdom of it, with thoſe who would be jumping and ſkipping after their new preachers, and the reſt laughing at their folly. Then many a weaver and tailor (as we ſee among the methodiſts) would quit his loom and his thimble, and ſet out on the more eaſy and profitable work of inſtructing mankind.

I could mention a pariſh in the north of Ireland, where the late curate, through obſtinacy, neglected to do his duty, and left his people *to be carried all away* by a neighbouring Curate, who having then juſt turned methodiſt, was nearly ſtark mad. The people ſoon caught the infection, and imagined angels or devils were always coming about them; they would hear devils, at the duſk of the evening whizzing paſt them in the fields, and would come ſcreeching into the houſes. The women at the preaching would tumble down on their backs, and work with their legs, and thighs, and cry out, "I ſee Saint Peter, and "Saint Paul, I ſee John the Baptiſt, and all the "angels!" Then they had conſtant extacies, viſions, and illuminations, they would ſee, they ſaid heaven and hell, and all the inviſible world. They had ſharp eyes. This wild work continued for near two years; the people then were ſo long out of their ſenſes. Nor have they as yet indeed quite recovered, for they ſtill think the ſpirit wrought all the wonders I have mentioned. They were viſited with a variety of male and female preachers, during their fury, who helped to increaſe their frenzy. All this was owing to the Curate's

rate's neglecting his duty, who left them thus to chooſe inſtructers for themſelves; and a pretty choice they made. I could tell as much about them as would fill up the whole of this pamphlet, all which could be confirmed by the oaths of creditable perſons, who quietly looked on. Theſe holy fervours took place in the pariſh of D—— in the dioceſs of Down. The Gentleman, who had the honour of firſt kindling them, is now bawling away in Dublin; but I am afraid he *is crackt in the upper ſtory*, poor creature.

The United Provinces of America, which are conſtantly dinned into our ears, are now turning wild for want of an eſtabliſhment. I had a letter ſome time ago from a correſpondent in New-York, who is himſelf a great enemy to all theſe old inſtitutions, containing theſe words. "The unbounded liberty of religious "toleration here, has produced in ſome an indifference "to any particular form, and on the contrary, in other "weak people, the utmoſt extravagance of enthuſi-"aſm, of theſe the ſhaking quakers are moſt re-"markable."

It is not my purpoſe to point out now the uſe of eſtabliſhing a particular mode of religion in every county, which all wiſe nations have thought neceſſary from the days of Conſtantine to the preſent time; nor to ſhew the various perfections of the elegant liturgy of the church of Ireland. I ſhall only remark, that it is the intereſt of every proteſtant man of property in this kingdom, to ſupport that church; becauſe, the weaker it is made, popery becomes ſtronger, and conſequently their title to their eſtates more inſecure. For the catholics think, their eſtates belong to them, and would take them from them if they were able. It is alſo the intereſt of Government to ſupport the church, that the preferments they give away may be more valuable, which increaſes their own power. The men of fortune ſhould conſider, that taking away the property from the church, is only injuring their younger ſons. For the valuable eccleſiaſtic preferments in this kingdom are moſtly poſſeſſed by theſe, and the

gentlemen who kindly come to us from England. The ſons of poor or middling men of this country, be their merit ever ſo great, ſeldom get more than a curacy or ſmall vicarage all their days. Indeed the Biſhop of Cloyne, whoſe abilities and virtues I reſpect, ſeems to think that they do not deſerve more; for he ſays, they cannot from their condition procure books or be ſcholars. If his Lordſhip would conſider a little, the liberal encouragement given to young men of merit, be they ever ſo poor, by the generous univerſity of Dublin, he might poſſibly alter his opinion; and I now humbly tell his Lordſhip with Juvenal, *Tamen imâ plebe Quiritem facundum invenies.* I could mention now by name, if it were neceſſary, many clergymen, ſons to men of fortune, poſſeſſing large livings in our church, who are more fit to be whippers-in to a pack of hounds, than preachers of the meek goſpel of Chriſt. Others too, of the ſame rank, I could point out, who ſhould have been made clerks to bankers, ſo fond they are of handling the gold. I know one of this deſcription, who, though he has not a ſingle excellence of head or heart, and can ſcarce ſpell a common Engliſh word, yet poſſeſſes, beſides his eſtates, pluralities to the amount of £1400 a-year, beſtowed on him by holy biſhops. He has ſubmitted to the meaneſt and moſt ſordid actions, to ſave a few ſhillings; for his life and ſoul is centered in money, which is the only God he adores. He has an utter averſion to every man of merit, eſpecially if he be poor; and would not allow one of this ſort, though ever ſo diſtinguiſhed for learning, genius and virtue, to poſſeſs even a curacy under him. His pariſhioners abhor him, as they do the black fiend of hell, and his countenance bears a near reſemblance to what we ſhould ſuppoſe to be the viſage of that fallen ſpirit; ſo that a phyſiognomiſt would pronounce him a villain by looking in his face. Two or three of ſuch vile fellows as theſe help, though unjuſtly, to give the clergy a bad name. Indeed if they were all as bad as he, God Almighty

mighty would ſurely ſend ſome judgment on them, and deſtroy them off the face of the earth.

It is a common ſubject of converſation in every mixed company, that the clergy of the church of Ireland are too rich, that they are too fond of money, and of this world's vain goods. The laity think that they themſelves can never have enough, but they take care to preſcribe narrow limits to the clergy. They think that their own kingdom is of this world, and that the clergy's ſhould be of the next. Now I confeſs I cannot entirely come into this wild way of reaſoning. A beneficed clergyman, ſuppoſe, of the church of Ireland, has to keep a houſe, and ſupport a wife and family, in a manner becoming his ſtation; he is alſo required to educate his children decently; he is bound too by duty, to give a part of his temporal goods to ſupply the wants of the poor, a heavy tax on him in this our poor country. All this will take from him, if not the whole, at leaſt a large ſhare of his income. But this income dies with himſelf; and if he does not before his death provide ſomething for his family, his wife and children may be left on the wide world; accuſtomed always to enjoy, without toil and drudgery, the neceſſaries, conveniencies, and poſſibly, comforts of life; how can they bear to be ſuddenly deprived of theſe, and of the means of common ſubſiſtence? A clergyman therefore ſhould be moderately attentive to his family affairs, *The man that provides not for his own*, ſays St. Paul, *and eſpecially for thoſe of his own houſe, has denied the faith, and is worſe than an infidel.* Why then ſhould a clergyman be called avaricious for doing what the laws of nature and of the goſpel ſo ſtrongly inculcate? For my part, I cannot ſee how a clergyman's having a large income, injures ſociety more than a layman's having it. It is to be ſuppoſed he does as much good with it, that he gives as much away in charity, and encourages as much the national manufactures. He applies it at leaſt to as few bad purpoſes. He ſets at leaſt as good an example. If he be even a wicked

man, the ſanctity of his ſtation prevents him from doing many enormities he would otherwiſe commit. He has no intereſts ſeparate from thoſe of the community; he is ſubject to the ſame laws. The money he ſpends goes out among the people at large, or probably among thoſe from whom he immediately receives it. Why then all this clamour againſt the clergy? Becauſe the world is ſo wicked, that it thinks there is no occaſion for either clergy or religion at all. If the income poſſeſſed by the officiating inferior clergy were divided equally among them, it is thought they would have about £140 a-year, apiece, which I humbly think is not very exorbitant. Yet this would be improper, as it would hinder biſhops from beſtowing on the clergy preferments ſuitable to their reſpective merits; but what theſe merits are, I ſhall not undertake to define. One thing I am ſure of, that every day I riſe, I feel more and more the narrowneſs of my own circumſtances, and ſo do my poor wife and children.

It is alſo an univerſal ſubject of complaint, that men of real deſert are ſcarce ever rewarded in our church, and that blockheads, with the faſhionable accompliſhments, are raiſed high above their heads. Then the people commonly point out ſome inſtances to prove all this. That their complaints are wholly imaginary, I am not ſo bold as to aſſert; and if I ſhould, experience might poſſibly give me the lie. However, I ſhall not enter particularly into a ſubject ſo nice as this, leſt I ſhould give offence to ſome of my ſuperiors, which I will endeavour always to avoid. Yet one thing I hope I may ſafely ſay, that it ſhould be the ſtudy of every man of power, who has a regard to the honour, dignity, and ſtability of the eſtabliſhed church, to promote thoſe whoſe abilities and conduct would make it more reſpectable. The neceſſity for this ſcarce ever exiſted ſo much as at preſent, when the church of Ireland, and all true religion is aſſailed, I may ſay, by a hoſt of enemies. The various church preferments ſhould be conſidered as ſo many rewards offered to diligence, literature and virtue; and I hope they often

are

are ſo in fact. If theſe were leſſened or deſtroyed, then ſo many inducements to induſtry, learning, and piety would be diminiſhed or removed. The elegant Univerſity of Ireland, the great ſupport of the proteſtant religion, ſo famed for its admirable ſyſtem of education, would then be ſenſibly injured. Three parts out of four of the ſtudents are generally deſigned for the church: But if the eccleſiaſtic emoluments were leſſened, few young men of genius or tolerable expectations would ſubmit to the toil of ſtudy, for the ſake of the paltry pittance then allowed them. Literature then would daily decline, and a nation without literature is a nation of barbarians. The eſtabliſhed clergy may be conſidered at preſent, I believe, as the moſt learned body of the kingdom; but if the encouragements to literature were removed, they would then be a pack of mean illiterate beings, deſpicable for their low-breeding, like ſome of the raw blades who take a trip to Glaſgow college in the winter, with a crock of butter and a cheeſe, and come back here in the ſpring, with their maſter's degrees written pompouſly on parchment, and put in a tin box. The late biſhop of Down, to his credit be it ſpoken, was famous in his time for decorating the church with ſuch ornaments as theſe. And thus more than forty young gentlemen, educated in our Univerſity, many of whom for learning, abilities, and religious knowledge would do honour to the church, are now walking about through Dublin, and cannot, after ſo many years of ſtudy, get even a curacy to ſupport them. It is neceſſary alſo to remark, that if the church preferments were leſſened in value, the fellows of our univerſity would not go out on the college-livings, as they become vacant, and thus there would very ſeldom be a vacancy for the young ſtudents who read for fellowſhips.

I could wiſh that ſome of the dignitaries of our church did not give room for the charge brought againſt them by the laity, of pride, luxury, and neglect of duty. I could wiſh that their conduct ſhowed them to be more attentive to the great virtue of humi-

mility, enjoined by the precepts, and diſplayed in the example, of their divine Maſter. The Son of God quit the boſom of his Father, and the glories he enjoyed there before the world was, and came down to this globe, the reſidence of weak and wicked mortals, and took upon him the form of a man, and aſſumed the condition of the loweſt among men, and became a ſervant to the very meaneſt of his diſciples. He waſhed his diſciples feet, and bade them, as he was, *to be meek and lowly in heart.* Clergymen therefore, who are ſuppoſed to be the followers of this divine Inſtructor, ſhould of all others be moſt humble. *Whoever is greateſt among you,* he ſays to them, *let him be ſervant of all.* I wiſh ſome of our pious dignitaries would ſeriouſly think of this now and then; if ſo, they might not lord it with ſo much inſolence over their poor inferiors. A few of them, whoſe names I could mention, are beginning now to forget they are clergymen at all; but may be they'll be put in mind of it in a certain place, when it is too late. Yet I cannot ſay from my little acquaintance with biſhops, (which God knows is very little, and may probably be leſs) that they are ſo haughty and tyrannical as ſome enemies to our church are apt to repreſent them. For my part, I will be ſo candid as to own, that I never yet met with, what I may call, inſolent uſage from any of them. I look on their office as truly apoſtolical, and think, that their poſſeſſing ſuch wealth as they do, is by no means injurious to the ſtate. It does not become one of my low ſtation to examine at all into their conduct and manners, and praiſe, or cenſure them, who are ſo much above me; *to their own Maſter they ſtand or fall. God forbid that I ſhould ſay any thing againſt the Lord's anointed.*

I may only remark, I hope without offence, that a few of the fine deans, archdeacons, and rectors are often too inſolent to us poor depending curates, who dare not reply. I might here give inſtances of their harſh conduct to myſelf, but do not chooſe to make my private injuries a ſubject of public complaint. I muſt bear it with patience, as becomes one of my profeſſion.

feſſion. Yet I cannot help taking notice now and then of the haughty demeanour of ſome of theſe bodies, when they get their high preferments, They ſtalk, and ſtrut, and look down on us, and erect their plumes, like a turkey-cock when he is going to tread the hen. I have not time now to make any remarks on the ſervile flattery paid by ſome of theſe to temporal lords, who, by a proſtitution of words, are called friends to the church, while they are enemies to religion. I may only ſay, that the means of gaining the favour of theſe great men are not always the pureſt imaginable. But I ſhall produce no inſtances, leſt I ſhould give offence, which ſtill has been my invariable ſtudy through life. Yet, amidſt the ſplendid criminals that preſent themſelves on every ſide, it ſhows great forbearance not to pop out a name. Since the introduction of chriſtianity, there never was an age, I ſuppoſe, ſo corrupt and void of religion as the preſent. The Devil ſeems now to have the ſupreme ſway in this world. The ſcriptures ſay *he is the God of this world*, and every day's experience proves him to be ſo. Our quality are in general eager to run to the houſe dedicated to the Devil, but carefully keep away from the ſacred edifice of God. The pureſt and moſt perfect mode of chriſtian worſhip is unable to entice them. *They ſtop their ears againſt it*, they will not liſten. *Shall I not judge for theſe things, ſaith the Lord?* Some of the clergy of our church, eſpecially thoſe in Dublin, are beginning to ſuit now the faſhionable turn of the times. They hate to diſcompoſe their poliſhed hearers by harſh unpleaſing truths; *they ſpeak to them ſmooth things, they propheſy deceits.* It is odious to hear a coxcomb in a Dublin-pulpit talking of his politeneſs, his propriety, his predicament, his ſociety, and his gentility, while he ſhould be *reaſoning of righteouſneſs, temperance, and judgment to come*, or while he ſhould be telling his hearers of *life and immortality brought to light through the goſpel.* This pretty way of preaching has produced the ſwarm of methodiſts, and ſuch wild enthuſiaſts, as are plaguing us at preſent.

They

They tell us they do not hear the ſound doctrines of the goſpel preached in the church, and therefore they muſt go to ſome place elſe to hear them. I am ſorry for it. Moſt of the preſbyterian miniſters are becoming moralizers of this ſort, or *new-light men*, as the term is, which, however pleaſing to themſelves, is not quite ſo agreeable to their hearers, many of whom I really believe would turn to our church, if the clergy, quitting their vain conceits, would preach Chriſt Jeſus and his goſpel. It is but juſtice to own now, with reſpect to the catholics, that, though they exceed in number, both church-men and diſſenters in the part of Ireland where I live, yet they are always quiet and inoffenſive in their conduct. And therefore I muſt ſtill ſuppoſe, that the diſturbances in the ſouth are chiefly owing to the dark underhand workings of ſome wily inſtigators, enemies to our religion, and the peace of ſociety.

January, 1787.

F I N I S.

BM